



# Baptismal Tank Safety



Baptism by immersion is a public demonstration that someone has committed their life to God. Yet the water that represents salvation could cause injury or death.

Slips, trips and falls in puddles of water left on the floor are only one possible danger as newly baptized Christians leave the baptismal pool. Use the information in this sheet to prevent falls and several other dangers related to baptismal tanks, including injury to others and damage to church property.

## Baptismal Tank Dangers

### Slips and Falls

Wet surfaces are slippery surfaces. Water splashed outside the baptismal tank and getting into or stepping out of a baptismal tank can be hazardous. Make sure handrails and non-stick surfaces are installed on steps leading into and out of baptismal tanks.

### Electrocution

Combining a sound system or electric heating device with water can be deadly. Always test any water heating devices before use and turn them off before the ceremony. Keep all sound system equipment away from anyone standing in water. Only use wireless microphones in or near the baptismal tank.

### Drowning

Small children left unsupervised can fall into baptismal tanks and drown. Never leave a baptismal tank unsupervised and be sure the tank is properly drained and secured following a baptismal ceremony.

### Burns

Burns can result from water that is heated too hot. Check the temperature of your tank 90 minutes and right before the ceremony to be sure the temperature is safe.

### Contaminated Water

Water left to sit in baptismal tanks for days or longer can breed bacteria and mold, creating a dangerous environment for anyone who enters your church. Be sure your tank is drained completely and cleaned out in a timely manner following each baptismal ceremony.

### Water damage

Over time, water pipes may leak or burst under floors or behind walls. Moisture can also seep in and damage the tank itself or the surrounding areas. It's important to have your church safety officer or a local plumber to regularly perform maintenance checks on baptismal piping.

## Baptismal Tank Safety Measures

Protect your members by following these baptismal tank safety measures.

### Before use

- Make sure your baptismal tank has an overflow drain.
- Ensure steps into the tank and the tank bottom have non-slip treads or slip resistant surfaces.



- Install handrails along the steps into the tank.
- Test all water heating devices before use.
- Monitor the tank filling process.
- Check the water temperature 90 minutes before and again right before use.
- If needed, assign church deacons or elders to guard the tank to ensure no one falls in.

### During the Ceremony

- Keep microphones and other electrical equipment from touching anyone in the baptistery. Only use wireless microphones.
- Have towels ready for participants to dry off, thus avoiding a trail of water.
- Prevent slips and falls on wet flooring by having towels to mop up wet floors immediately after the baptism.

### After the Ceremony

- Ensure the tank is drained immediately after use.
- Check the water heating device after the baptism to ensure it has been turned off.
- Lock doors between the church common areas and baptismal tank to prevent children from playing unsupervised in the baptismal tank area.

### Between Ceremonies

- Check to ensure faucets are not leaking water into the baptismal tank and allowing sitting water to breed bacteria.
- Clean and sanitize the tank based on the manufacturer's recommendations.



Adventist Risk Management,<sup>®</sup> Inc. (ARM) is invested in the safety and success of your ministry. We provide risk management resources to help you protect the people and physical assets at the heart of your ministry. Our ministry is to **protect** your ministry. Learn more at [AdventistRisk.org/About-Us](https://AdventistRisk.org/About-Us). #ARMcares



#### REPORT YOUR CLAIM RIGHT AWAY

1.888.951.4276 • [CLAIMS@ADVENTISTRISK.ORG](mailto:CLAIMS@ADVENTISTRISK.ORG)

#### STAY INFORMED

[ADVENTISTRISK.ORG/SOLUTIONS](https://ADVENTISTRISK.ORG/SOLUTIONS)



This material is fact based general information and should not, under any circumstances, be considered specific legal advice regarding a particular matter or subject. Please consult your local attorney or risk manager if you would like to discuss how a local jurisdiction deals with any specific circumstances you may be facing.