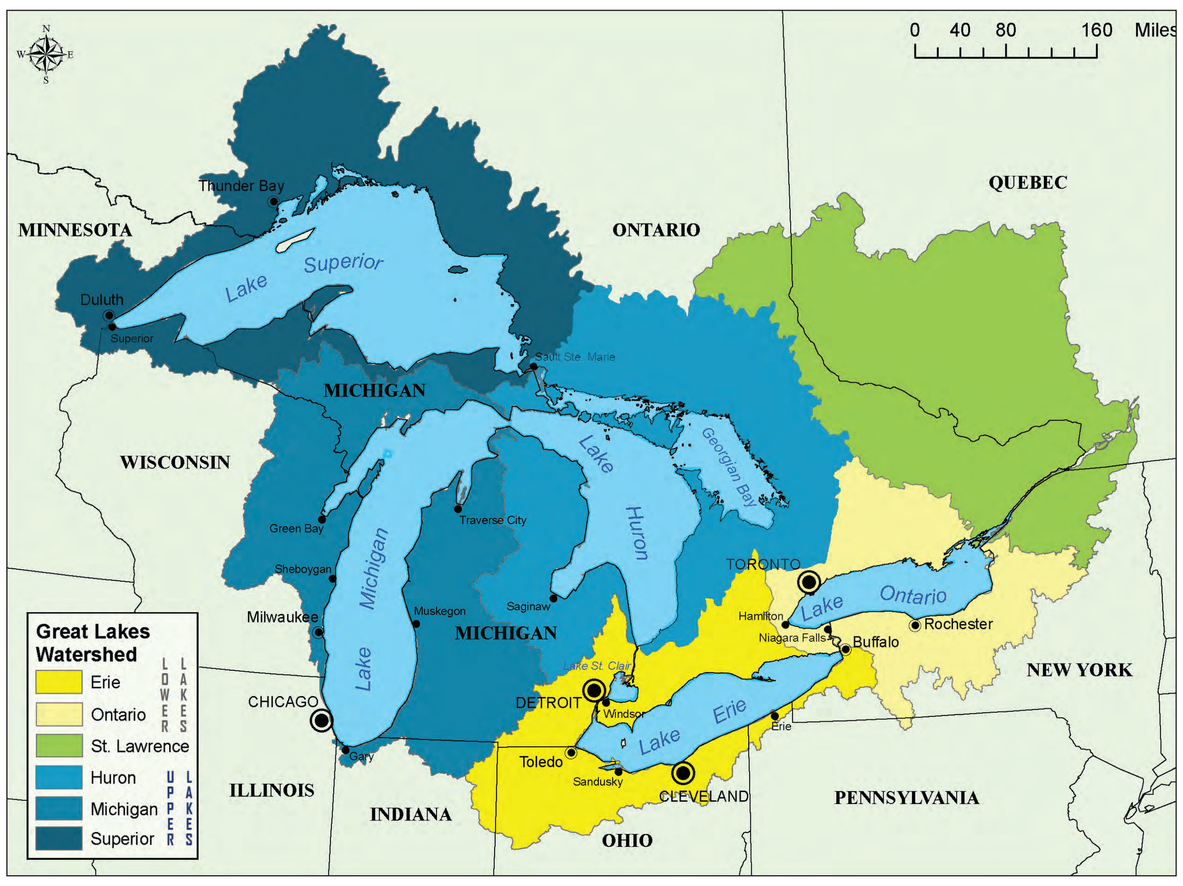
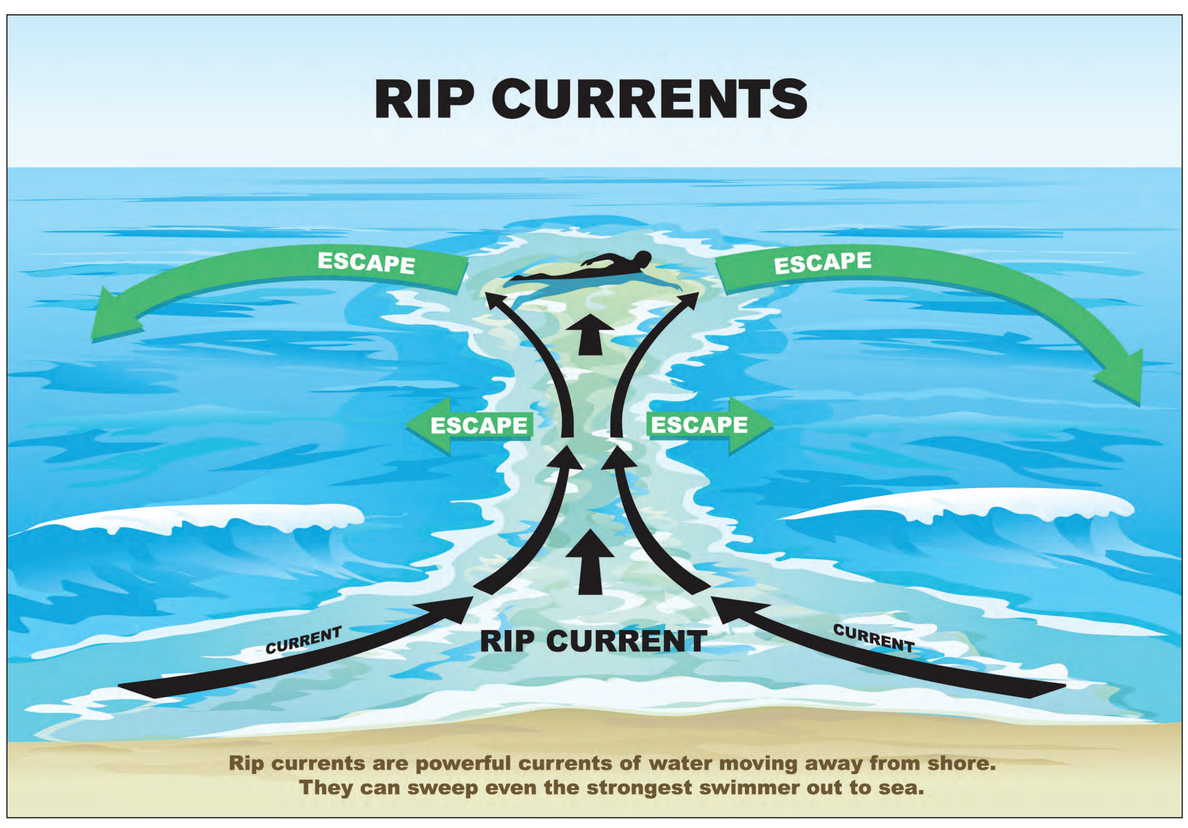
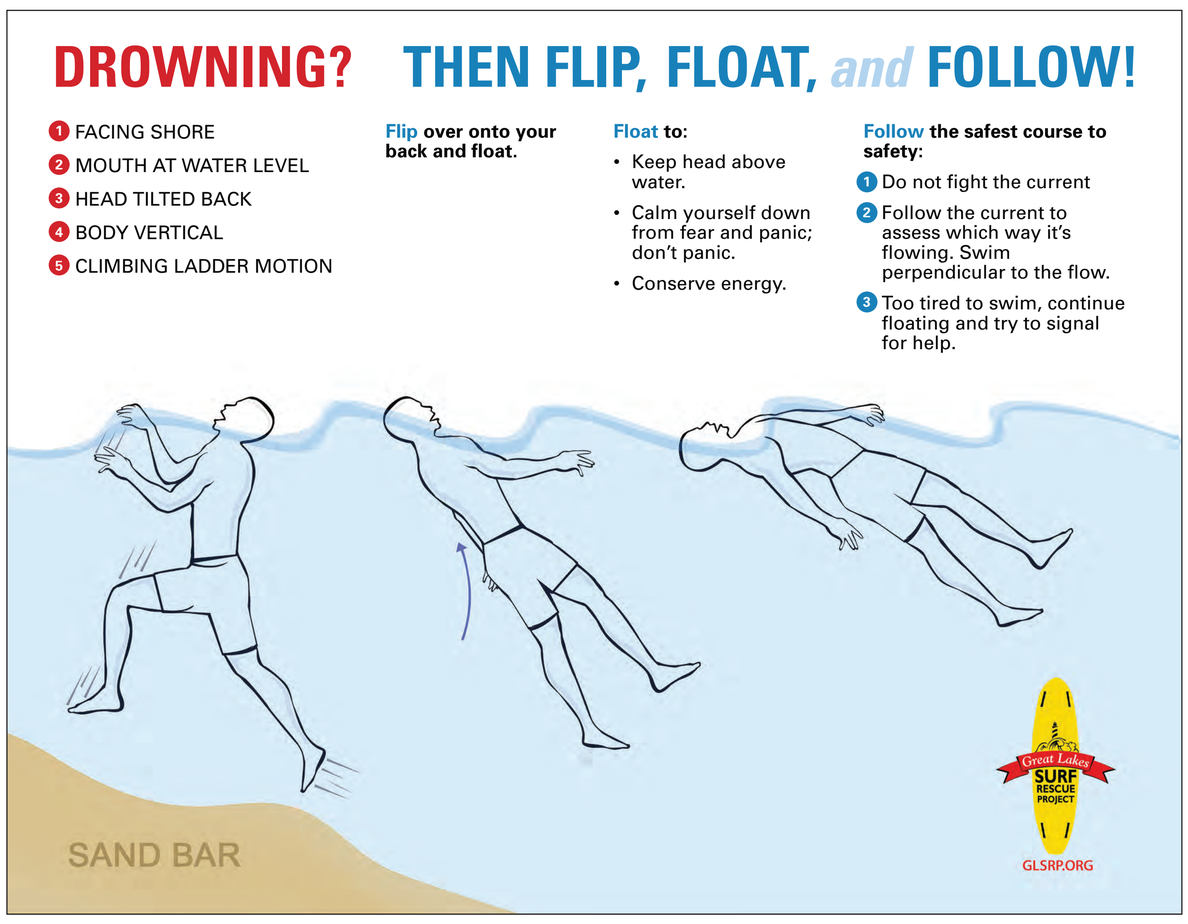
PLAY SAFE at Lake Erie

1. Swim with a buddy in designated beach areas.
2. Designate a water watcher. Take turns.
3. File a float plan. Tell someone who is not going to the beach where you are going, when you are leaving and when you expect to get back.
4. Wear life jackets at the beach if you don't know how to swim and during big waves.
5. Lake Erie's bottom is not flat. Sudden drop offs from raised sandbars and changes in the lakebed can occur. Waist deep water is a good rule of thumb for playing with friends.
6. Water currents constantly circulate in Lake Erie and can pull swimmers out to deep water. Currents are nearly always present along structures and can be dangerously strong. Avoid jumping off or swimming near piers, jetties and breakwalls especially when there are waves on Lake Erie.
7. If you get caught in a current, flip on your back and float or swim at a right angle away from the pull of the current and then toward the shore.
8. Lake Erie's water can be cold, even when the air temperature is hot. Jumping into cold water (< 70 ºF) can cause your body to go into shock regardless of the air temperature or your ability to swim. Water draws heat away from the body 25-times faster than air.
9. Learn the signs of drowning.
10. If someone needs help, throw anything that floats to them such as a life jacket, life ring, cooler or inflated beach toy. Seek help from others and call 911. Shout to the person in danger to flip on their back and float until someone can help them. Do not swim out to a victim and try to rescue a person unless you have something that floats with you as all too often the rescuer can become the victim.







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