

Beef up safety at beaches: Lee Lam Thye

Published on: Feb 8, 2012 @ 7:21

Published: Monday February 6, 2012 MYT 5:01:00 PM, The Star Online

KUALA LUMPUR: The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has urged relevant agencies and authorities to beef up safety at beaches throughout the country in view of the growing number of deaths by drowning each year.

Its [chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye](#) said management strategies should be drawn up and implemented effectively to prevent such tragedies.

"We need a strategy for safe beaches, free from drowning. It is not about stopping people from having fun, or preventing them from being in, on, under and around water. We want them to be safe while doing so," he said in a statement here, on Monday.

He said beach safety has not been addressed properly and public safety at the beach tended to be a forgotten issue while considerable attention is given to the protection of environment and other matters.

He said according to the Fire and Rescue Department the number of drownings recorded in 2010 was 331 and in 2011, 303 cases.

He said there are many factors which cause drowning such as unrestricted and ready access to beaches, lack of knowledge and understanding of water conditions, ignorance, disregard or misjudgment of dangerous water conditions and lack of awareness on water safety.

"It is the responsibility of organisations, agencies, and authorities with jurisdiction over beach areas to identify and preferably minimise the risks of injury or death by drowning.

"This responsibility is not sufficiently met by installing signs or providing safety equipment," he said.

Apart from education on safe practices during water activities, Lee said people should also advocate for proper supervision of beaches and other water attractions and support legislation that requires the use of personal floatation devices to be worn in the water. - Bernama