

Lifebelt Boards

Providing essential information and raising awareness on safe water use

The concept

Water Rescue Services of Hungary, in cooperation with the Balaton Water Police, developed **a unified information, water safety and public safety board system** that promotes and enhances safe water use. The aim of the program is to raise awareness about the information needed to **use the water safely**, hence reducing and **preventing the number of water accidents**.

The Lifebelt Board system is set up in Hungary, at Lake Balaton, the largest lake in Central Europe, with around half million bathers/day on its beaches in the summer season.

The boards contain information that is essential to swim safely. Lifebelt Boards give beachgoers access to information that is difficult or impossible to find elsewhere.

Swimmers, water cyclists, sailors, bIn 2024, 85 boards were set up at beaches at Lake Balaton. ters and anglers often get into trouble because they are not well-informed. It is this lack of information that the board system aims to address, complemented by other means of communication (e.g. media coverage).



In 2024, 85 boards were set up at beaches at Lake Balaton.

Keszthely



Balatonfenyves



Révfülöp



Balatonfüred



Siófok

Lake Balaton



What is on the boards?

At the top of the sign there is a number, written in large letters: this is **the beach emergency code**, making it easier for water rescue services or ambulances **to pinpoint the exact location** in case of an emergency. The first four digits of the code show the postcode of the town, the fifth to sixth digits indicate the beach code and the last two digits specify the number of the beach stairs or other access point to the water on the beach.

The GPS coordinates associated with the code are transmitted by the rescue control centre to the rescue unit that is dispatched to help, so that it can reach the victim more quickly and easily.

A 24-hour storm warning system is in operation on Lake Balaton, based on measurements and forecasts from the national meteorological service's local observatory. Basically, it is a flashing light system on the lake shore. **The interpretation of the storm warning symbols** is included on the boards as well.

There is also an infographic on the **lakebed section of the beach** on the boards **showing the exact water depth** at a given distance from the shore. The bathers need to stop by the board and look at how deep the water is and think about how far they can go depending on their swimming ability, or how far they can go with their child.

The **first aid point**, the **emergency call number** and some **basic tips and rules** for bathing are also on the boards.

On the water-facing side of the signs, the beach emergency code can be found.

FOKOZAT LEVEL	FÉNY SIGNAL LIGHT	SZÉL WIND	SZABÁLYOK/REGULATIONS
ALAPHELYZET NO WARNING	NINCIS JELZÉS NO SIGNAL	→ 40 km/h	max. 500 m
ELSŐFOKÚ VIHARJELZÉS LEVEL 1		40-60 km/h	max. 500 m
MÁSODFOKÚ VIHARJELZÉS LEVEL 2		60 → km/h	

MEDERMETSZET - LAKEBED SECTION

40m → +40m → +10m →
120cm 180cm 200cm

ELSŐSEGÉLY HELY: a Nyugati bejáratnál
FIRST AID POINT: at the western entrance

SEGÉLYHÍVÓ EMERGENCY CALL 112

IDŐJÁRÁS / WEATHER: www.met.hu/balaton

FÜRDŐZÉSI TANÁCSOK / TIPS FOR BATHING



Where are the boards placed?

Lifebelt Boards are **posted at water access points** (stairs and lidos). If you go into the water, you can get information about where and how deep the water is at the beach before you go in.

The Lifebelt Boards are particularly useful for those who do not live locally and spend only a week or two or even just a few days a year at Lake Balaton and are not familiar with the local conditions.



Additional boards

On some beaches additional tables were posted by the entrance of water bike rentals to inform beach goers about the basic usage rules of water bicycles and the interpretation of the storm warning symbols.

At some beaches we created boards that show the map of the beach and highlight the first aid point, the rescue numbers (112, water police and water rescue services) the air and water temperature, the daily UV radiation intensity and the explication of UV index.



VÍZIMENTŐK
LIFEGUARDS
WASSERRETTUNG

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