



Photo by PH Danielle M. Sosa

Curtis has developed four rules for all to follow when swimming at Okinawa beaches and pools:

- Swim in a supervised area where lifeguards are on duty. Only 10 percent of water-related accidents happen when lifeguards are on duty. Swimming under supervision greatly reduces the chance of drowning.
- Never swim alone; use the buddy system. It's easy for a friend to assist or get assistance when he notices a partner having trouble in the water.
- Know your swimming limits and stay within them. Weaker swimmers should not attempt something they know they're not capable of doing.
- Always enter the water feet first, especially when diving in an unfamiliar area or in murky-water conditions. That way, you avoid hitting your head on underwater rocks or coral.

Another thing to remember is never swim during a typhoon or rough sea conditions. "People don't consider just how dangerous the water is," said Curtis. "During rough sea conditions, even strong swimmers have trouble in the rip currents."

Even though the water can be a dangerous place, it doesn't have to be if people just will take precautions during their summer trips to the beach or pool. **GW**

Cpl Brown is stationed at Marine Corps Base, Camp Butler.

Okinawa Base Safety has a water-safety video on their website (www.mcbbutler.usmc.mil). To see it, click on "internet," then click on the "sites" link in the top left portion of the screen, scroll down to "safety," and click on "water-safety video."

If you have a ".mil" address, log onto www.mcbbutler.usmc.mil and click on "intranet." Then click on the "sites" link in the top left portion of the screen, scroll down to "safety," and click on the "water-safety information" link. Then you can click on "water-safety video," as well as a number of other choices.—Ed.