

N.B. communities consider swim mask ban at pools, beaches

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Some public pools and beaches in New Brunswick may move to ban swim masks following recommendations made by a coroner's inquest last week.

Kyle DeBow, 12, was found floating face down in the pool at the Magic Mountain water park on Aug. 7, 2005 in Moncton. He was wearing a mask at the time.

Lifeguards testified during the inquest that it is difficult to tell whether children floating face down are in trouble or simply watching other swimmers underwater through their mask.

The coroner's inquest recommended Friday that masks be banned from all public pools and beaches.

There are no restrictions on the use of masks at pools in greater Moncton; in Riverview, the masks have only been allowed for the past year.

However, Barb Hurlbut, Riverview's aquatics supervisor, said the town may change that policy.

"We will revisit our decision based on the [inquest] findings," Hurlbut said. "So we may go back to our previous rule where they weren't allowed — and that rule was in place for 25 years."

Hurlbut said people who run pools in the area will discuss the inquest's recommendations and decide whether any changes are needed.