



# Waterpark Industry General & Fun Facts

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## GENERAL STATS:

- **Number of waterparks in North America:** More than 1,000  
*\*These numbers comprise all waterpark facilities, including municipal/city-owned pools with waterpark features, as well as corporately owned waterparks, independently owned waterparks and indoor/resort-style waterparks.*
- **Estimated attendance at North American waterparks during the Summer 2004 season:** about 73 million (includes United States, Canada and Mexico), with growth averaging 3-5 percent each year
- **Number of waterparks throughout the rest of the world:** About 600
- **Average attendance growth per year (North America over last 5 years):** 3-5 percent

## FUN FACTS

*(Note: The information that follows has been compiled from facts supplied to the WWA by outside sources. If discrepancies are noted, please contact the WWA.)*

- **First “official” waterpark created:** Wet 'N Wild, Orlando, Fla., 1977, by **George Millay** (b. 1929, d. 2006) (creator and founder of Sea World); WWA officially proclaimed Millay as “Father of the Waterpark Industry” in 2004 and awarded him with the Association’s first—and only, to date—“Lifetime Achievement Award.”
- **First U.S. indoor waterpark:** Polynesian Resort Hotel & Suites, Wisconsin Dells, Wis., 1989
- **First U.S. wave pool:** Point Mallard Park, Decatur, Ala., 1970
- **Longest indoor leisure river in the U.S.:** Zambezi River, Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells, Wis.
- **Tallest, fastest single-person, free-fall waterslide in the world:** 120-foot tall “Summit Plummet,” Blizzard Beach, Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.
- **Tallest raft-ride waterslide:** 11-story tall “Insane” at Beach Park, Fortaleza, Brazil
- **Largest wave pool in the U.S.:** Typhoon Lagoon, Orlando, Fla., at 115 feet wide by about 395 feet long, it is the largest in terms of bather capacity, annual visitors, water volume and wave height.
- **Largest wave pool in the world:** Dino Beach Water Park, Shanghai, China, at 181 feet wide by 360 feet long.
- **Largest indoor waterpark in the United States under one roof:** Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells, Wis. (125,000 square feet)
- **Largest indoor waterpark square footage at one resort in the United States:** Wilderness Hotel, Wisconsin Dells, Wis. (three waterparks at one resort totaling 161,000 square feet).
- **Largest indoor waterpark in North America:** World Waterpark, West Edmonton Mall, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (5 acres and 3.25 million gallons of water)

- **Largest indoor waterpark in the world:** Ocean Dome, Miyazaki City, Japan (322,752 square feet—about the length of three football fields)
- **Largest outdoor waterpark in the United States:** Noah's Ark Waterpark, Wisconsin Dells, Wis. (70 acres)
- **"The Waterpark Capital of the World" (largest concentration of waterparks in one area):** Wisconsin Dells, Wis. (18 indoor waterparks and 3 outdoor waterparks within 18 square miles, with more than 200 waterslides and 16 million gallons of water) *Source: Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau*
- **Fastest-growing segments of the waterpark industry in North America:** Indoor waterpark resorts and municipally owned/city owned waterparks
- **Fastest-growing regions of the world:** Eastern Europe and Far East/Pacific Rim

## **POPULAR TOP-10 LISTS:**

### **Best waterparks in U.S.**

(according to The Travel Channel, 2005)

1. Schlitterbahn Waterpark, New Braunfels, Texas
2. Blizzard Beach at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.
3. Raging Waters, San Dimas, Calif.
4. Water Country U.S.A., Williamsburg, Va.
5. Splish Splash, River Head, N.Y.
6. Knott's Soak City, Palm Springs, Calif.
7. Water World (Hyland Hills), Federal Heights, Colo.
8. Six Flags White Water, Marietta, Ga.
9. Wet 'n Wild, Las Vegas (now closed)
10. Noah's Ark, Wisconsin Dells, Wis.

### **U.S. waterparks with the highest attendance\***

(according to *Amusement Business* magazine)

1. Typhoon Lagoon (1,914,000), Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.
2. Blizzard Beach (1,778,000), Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.
3. Wet 'n Wild (1,340,000), Orlando, Fla.
4. Schlitterbahn (917,000), New Braunfels, Texas
5. Water Country USA (697,000), Williamsburg, Va.
6. Raging Waters (650,000), San Dimas, Calif.
7. Adventure Island (615,000), Tampa, Fla.
8. Noah's Ark (576,000), Wisconsin Dells, Wis.
9. Six Flags Hurricane Harbor (494,000), Arlington, Texas
10. Wet 'n Wild Emerald Pointe (489,000), Greensboro, N.C.
11. Six Flags White Water (452,000), Marietta, Ga.
12. Six Flags Hurricane Harbor (423,000), Jackson, N.J.
13. Soak City at Cedar Point (402,000), Sandusky, Ohio
14. Hyland Hills Water World (391,000), Federal Heights, Colo.
15. Six Flags Hurricane Harbor (357,000), Valencia, Calif.

\*Attendance estimated for calendar year 2005.

*This information has been compiled by the World Waterpark Association (WWA) from a variety of sources. Please credit WWA for its use unless otherwise indicated.*