



Swimming Safety

WEEK 7: 6 JULY, 2020

BEACH AND WATER SAFETY IN SAN DIEGO

Beautiful beaches and sunshine bring thousands of people to the San Diego beaches every year. Regardless of your swimming ability, brush up on your swimming safety knowledge with these guidelines from the San Diego Lifeguards:

- Learn to swim and never swim alone
- **ONLY swim when LIFEGUARD is ON DUTY**
- Supervise children closely, even when lifeguards are present
- Don't rely on flotation devices, such as rafts or inner-tubes. Even US Coast Guard approved life jackets are not a substitute for swimming ability
- Do not swim while under the influence of illicit drugs, medications that may cause impairment, or alcohol
- Don't dive into unfamiliar waters -- **feet first, first time**
- If you are in trouble, call or wave for help
- Follow regulations and lifeguard directions
- Always swim parallel to the shore
- If caught in a rip current, swim sideways until free, don't swim against the current



Snorkeling Safety

Always have a snorkel buddy, do not snorkel alone.
 Stay inside assigned snorkel areas or close to the shore.
 Have a plan for exiting the water in case you get tired and need a rest.
 Check the weather forecast and beach flags before entering the water.
 Use good quality equipment that fits well.
 Consider using a snorkel vest to feel more comfortable when you're in the water.
 For open water snorkeling, carry a high visibility swim buoy. It makes you noticeable for your buddy and other people. Boats passing nearby will spot you easily as well as you can rest on this floatation buoy if you're feeling tired.

- Scuba dive only if trained and certified -- and within the limits of your experience and training
- Report hazardous conditions to lifeguards or other beach management personnel
- Stay clear of coastal bluffs, they can collapse and cause injury
- Never turn your back to the ocean -- you may be swept off coastal bluffs or tide pool areas by waves that can come without warning

Before you head out for a day on the beach and in the water, know your limits. Too many people mistakenly consider themselves skilled swimmers, and therefore safe from the possibility of an accident. Seldom do they consider the consequences of cold water, sudden immersion, waves, currents, alcohol and fatigue. Overestimation of ability and underestimation of the effects of such conditions are the leading causes of drowning and disabling injuries.

THE NUMBERS:

- **Almost 4,000 people die from drowning every year**
- **One in five drowning victims are children under 14**
- **Majority of child drownings occur in residential pools and spas**

KNOW THE RULES FOR THE BEACH

The beach is *the place to go to kickback and relax*. But in order to keep everyone safe, please adhere to these rules and regulations for San Diego beaches:

Glass containers, any type of alcoholic beverages, smoking, and littering are NOT allowed on the beach, cliffs, walkways, park areas or adjacent parking lots.

Disturbing noise and overnight camping, sleeping, or parking is NOT allowed on the beach, cliffs, walkways, park areas or adjacent parking lots.

Where fire pits are provided during the summer months, they are

available on a first come, first served basis. Open beach fires outside containers are prohibited at all San Diego beaches. Fires are not allowed between midnight and 5 a.m. Only wood, charcoal or paper products may be used as fuel. Fuel for the fire may not exceed a height of more than twelve inches above the upper edge of the fire container. The fire must be extinguished before leaving the beach. Coals must be removed or deposited in hot coal containers.

Dogs are NOT allowed on the beach, boardwalk or adjacent parks between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. from April 1 through Oct. 31. At all other

hours, dogs must be on a leash. Owners are expected to pick up after their dog. Dogs are allowed at Dog Beach (adjacent to Ocean Beach) and Fiesta Island (in Mission Bay).

For more information on San Diego beaches, visit sandiego.gov/leisure.

Rules for the beaches and campgrounds on Camp Pendleton vary by location. For more information about Camp Pendleton, visit mccscp.com. You will find a link beach information under the Recreation tab.

RIP CURRENTS

Rip currents are powerful, narrow channels of fast-moving water that can occur at any surf beach with breaking waves, including the Great Lakes

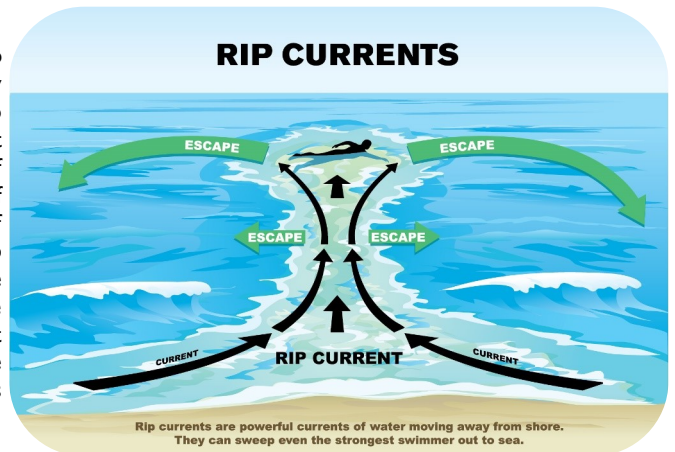
Moving at speeds of up to eight feet per second, rip currents can move faster than an Olympic swimmer. Don't confuse a rip current with an undertow. Rip currents are much more dangerous, because they flow on the surface of the water, can be very strong, and can extend some distance from the shore. An undertow can occur when water sinks back downhill into the sea after a wave has carried it uphill onto the beach. Unless the beach has a steep incline, the undertow will probably not be very powerful.

Rip currents most typically form at low spots or breaks in sandbars, and also near structures such as groins, jetties and piers. Often, rip currents are not easily identified, leading to swimmers getting caught in them. Rip currents can be killers. Panicked

swimmers often try to counter a rip current by swimming straight back to shore -putting themselves at risk of drowning because of fatigue. More than 80% of water rescues on surf beaches are due to rip currents. Lifeguards rescue tens of thousands of people in the U.S. every year, but it is estimated that 100 people are killed by rip currents annually.

If you are caught in a rip current, here's how to survive:

- Remain calm to conserve energy and think clearly.
- Never swim and fight against the current.
- Swim out of the current in a direction following the shoreline.
- If you are unable to swim out of a rip current, float or tread water. When out of the current, swim toward shore.
- If you are still unable to reach the shore, draw attention to yourself by waving your arm and yelling for help.
- If you see someone in trouble, get help from a lifeguard and throw the victim something that floats. Many people drown while trying to save someone else from a rip current.






LIFEGUARDS AND BEACH FLAGS IN SAN DIEGO

Lifeguards are staffed year-round at the permanent lifeguard stations in San Diego (Ocean Beach, South Mission Beach, Mission Beach, North Pacific Beach, Pacific Beach, Children's Pool, La Jolla Cove, La Jolla Shores). In summer, additional lifeguards are staffed in seasonal lifeguard towers. Lifeguards are generally on duty from 9 a.m. to dusk.

Check with lifeguards for specific staff hours.

Lifeguards post flags along the beach to impart information. Each beach uses a slightly different flag system so read the accompanying signs or ask the lifeguard to be sure. And always swim in areas near a lifeguard regardless of your swimming ability.

	A yellow and black checkered flag divides the beach into zones: swimming, surfing, or boating.
	A yellow flag with a black dot means "swimming only", (no surf boards or boats here).
	A red flag means "no swimming here". This also indicates rip currents and other unsafe conditions.

Sun Protection

- Seek shade
- Wear a hat
- Wear clothing
- Wear sunglasses
- Apply sunscreen
- Avoid midday sun
- Limit time in the sun



CAMP PENDLETON SAFETY CENTER

We provide a wide range of safety support services aimed at preserving combat readiness by identifying hazards and reducing risk to people and resources. We perform inspections, provide technical support, assist with safety program implementation, conduct mishap investigations, and offer safety training opportunities for all base personnel to include tenant commands. We want to empower all Sailors, Marines, civilians, and their families to embrace a proactive culture of risk identification and management to achieve zero preventable mishaps.

Have a question? Email us at: Cpen_safety_help@usmc.mil

Commanding General's Safety Hotline: 760.763.7233