

BEACH AND WATER SAFETY

Captain Bruce Norman

Captain William Matthias

EMERALD ISLE FIRE DEPARTMENT



WELCOME

- Introduction
- Lifeguard Program and 911 System
- Fire, EMS, Police and USCG Response
- Water and Beach Safety
- Spinal Management
- Jellyfish/Man-Of-War safety
- Rip Currents
- Overview/Question /Answer



Lifeguard/911

- Lifeguards are stationed at the East Regional and the West Regional Parks
- Lifeguard personnel(USLA Certified) have roving responsibilities along the beach strand
- These lifeguards switch roles throughout the workday
- Their responsibilities include water safety, medical care, education and awareness along with enforcement of town ordinances
- Lifeguards are on duty 7 days a week from 1000 to 1730 (Unless of inclement weather)from Memorial Day thru Labor Day

Enhanced 911

- Where your 911 call is routed to and information you should have when calling in an emergency to 911.
 - 911 is routed to the Carteret County Communications Center located in Morehead City
 - The information the telecommunicator will be asking for will include: Nature and location of the emergency(BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE) Also, they will need your information for record purposes.



Fire, EMS, Police and USCG Response

- Once the 911 system is activated, there will be a three agency response and sometimes a four agency response depending on the nature of the call.
 - Water rescue and victims are on the beach or medical emergency- 3 agencies
 - Water rescue lifeguard in the water- 3 agencies
 - Water rescue on the outside of the sandbar- 4 agencies
 - Water rescue with a confirmed drowning or submersion- 4 agencies
 - Boat in distress- 4 agencies

Beach Safety

- BE PREPARED WHEN COMING TO THE BEACH
 - Sunscreen
 - Umbrella/Tent/Hat
 - STAY HYDRATED-Water/Gatorade
 - Food (Very important for diabetic patients)
 - Medications
 - Cell Phone



Beach Safety

- KNOW BEFORE YOU GO AND BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS!
 - Check with the on duty lifeguard for current water conditions and/or warnings
 - Check what flags are flying
 - Warnings could include surf and/or jellyfish and Man-of-War warnings



- LOCATION: Make a mental note as to where you are on the beach strand. Such as, East Lifeguard tower, west side of Bogue Inlet Pier, 6811 Ocean Dr.

Signs and Flags

Each public walkway is posted with rip current warnings and safety signage.

Lifeguard protected areas are posted with Lifeguard on duty/off duty signs along with flags that are raised everyday to indicate the surf conditions and designate the lifeguard protected area of the beach strand.

Signs and Flags

Flags are Red and Yellow in color and are used by the lifeguard to indicate to the public that:

Yellow: Always use caution while in the water

Red: Recommended that beach patrons do not enter the water, if so no deeper than knee deep.

If the beach in its entirety is closed due to dangerous surf conditions, then the fire department will red flag the entire beach utilizing solid red flags.

Signs and Flags

[revised beach warning flag sign.pdf](#)

Spinal Injury

Swim near a lifeguard

Check with lifeguards for surf conditions

STOP, look and walk into the water

DON'T dive into any unknown water

DON'T dive toward the bottom of oncoming waves

DON'T stand with your back to the waves

DON'T jump or dive from piers, jetties, bridges or cliffs

Avoid bodysurfing or surfing straight "over the falls", ride the shoulder

While bodysurfing, keep an arm out in front of you



Signs of a Spinal Injury

Signs of a spinal injury can include things other than paralysis, but they require immediate attention. They include:

- Bruises, scrapes or cuts to the head, face, neck or shoulder area
- Pain or tenderness in the neck or back
- Partial or complete paralysis, difficulty breathing
- Weakness in the arms and/or legs
- Numbness and tingling in the arms and/or legs

Beach Safety- Weather

The weather is an uncontrollable factor that even meteorologists have a hard time predicting. Being able to observe certain patterns will help you recognize potential weather hazards before it hits you.

Before leaving home check the forecast.



- Sudden shifts in wind direction
- Wind velocity
- Temperature fluctuations
- In-coming storm cloud formations
- Distant thunder
- Distant lightening

Lightning

Every year, lightning strikes and kills people on or near bodies of water. Summer is the peak season for outdoor and water-related activities, and is when most lightning deaths and injuries occur. As recently as 2011, a lifeguard was fatally struck by lightning in Florida. Lightning cannot be prevented, but the vulnerability of lifeguards, beachgoers, and patrons near bodies of water can be minimized.



Lightning

- Vulnerable locations include: beaches, indoor and outdoor pools, diving boards, lifeguard stands, and nearby outdoor recreational facilities.
- While every state has reported lightning-related fatalities, the highest numbers are reported in states bordering the Great Lakes, southern states bordering the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico, and the four corners states of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona.

Lightning

- Locations that offer protection from lightning:
 - Fully-enclosed buildings that are grounded with wiring and plumbing
 - Fully-enclosed metal vehicles (no soft top convertibles)



Lightning

- Locations that do not offer protection from lightning:
 - Beaches
 - Water
 - Open-sided pavilions (such as picnic areas)
 - Restrooms, changing facilities, and showers
 - Tents
 - Small personal water craft (e.g. Jet Skis)

Lightning

Lightning most frequently occurs within 10 miles of a thunderstorm (although there are occurrences when cloud-to-ground lightning strikes known as "bolts from the blue" can strike up to 20 miles away from a thunderstorm). It is generally recommended that patrons be notified (or evacuated based on the emergency action plan) and staff take shelter when thunderstorms move within 10 miles.

Lightning

- **Warning and Communication Tools**
- NOAA weather radio.
- Forecasts can be monitored via the internet if available on-site.
- Information about the proximity of lightning strikes is available via the flash-to-bang rule, local on-site detection devices, smart phone applications and commercial notification services.

Aquatic Life

With the ever increasing population explosion in the coastal areas, the number of people in the marine environment also increases, and so does the opportunity for close encounters with the many types of hazardous marine life.

- Jelly fish
- Portuguese Man of War
- Sharks
- Stingrays

Portuguese Man of War



Portuguese Man of War



Portuguese Man of War



Jellyfish



JellyFish



Stingrays



Stingrays



Sharks

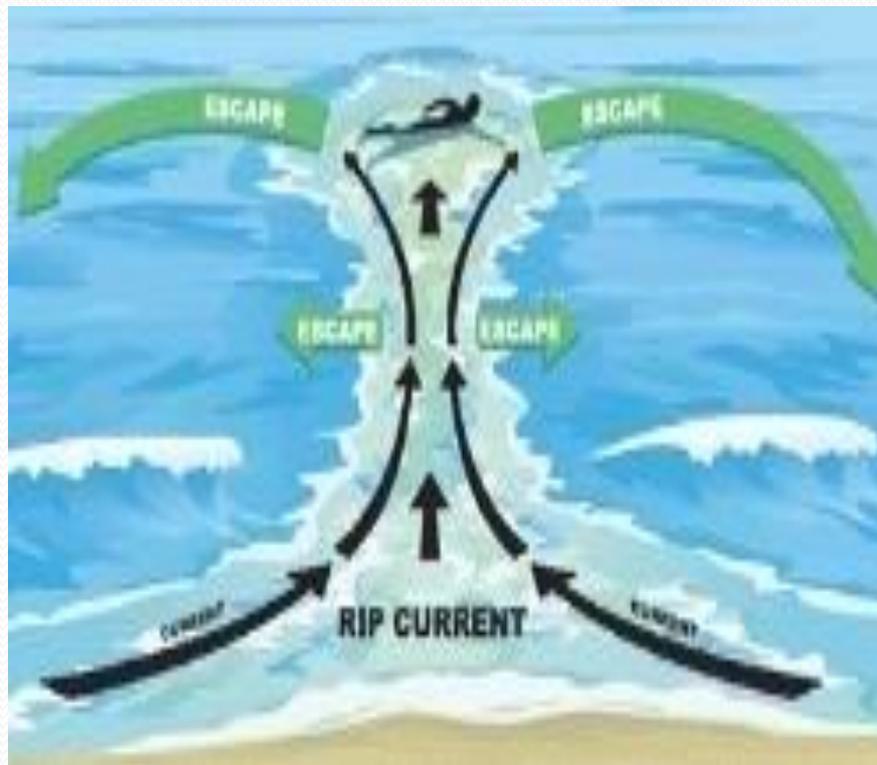


Sharks



RIP CURRENTS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkObAXrjpzs>



Rip Currents- Characteristics

- Rough
- Choppy
- Water is discolored(suspended particles)
- Foam
- Waves not breaking in a rip current
- Objects, including swimmers being pulled seaward
- <http://oceantoday.noaa.gov/ripcurrent/welcome.html>

RIP CURRENTS

- If caught in a rip current:
 - **DON'T PANIC! STAY CALM! DON'T FIGHT THE CURRENT!**
 - Swim parallel to the beach until you don't feel the pull of the rip current then swim back to shore- or let the rip current take you out, once you stop feeling the pull of the rip current, swim parallel to the beach and then swim back to the shore.
 - If you can't escape, float or tread water /yell and wave for help
 - REMEMBER- NEVER SWIM ALONE

Types of Rip Currents

Rip currents can be defined in four types:

- Fixed or Stationary Rips: located in areas where the depth underneath the rip is greater than surrounding depths.

- Permanent Rips: Usually stationary year-round and vary in intensity. And are more pronounced near piers, rock jetties, drain pipes, or projecting points of land.

- Flash Rips: Temporary in nature and generated with increased volumes of water brought to shore from concentrated sets of waves.

- Traveling or Transient Rips: Traveling rips usually occur in a strong, one direction swell movement with long well-defined periods. Travelling rips can be pushed 200 or 300 yards and farther along the beach, depending on the size of surf.

RESCUE BOUYS LOCATIONS

- Over 110 rescue bouys are available to the public.
- Most public walkways in town have rescues bouys.



QUESTION AND ANSWER

