



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 27, 2023

# Fourth of July Safety at City of San Diego Beaches and Mission Bay

## FIRE-RESCUE LIFEGUARDS AND SAN DIEGO POLICE MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BEACH SAFETY AND BOATING

SAN DIEGO – On Thursday morning, June 29, 2023, the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department’s Lifeguard Division (SDFD) and members of the San Diego Police Department’s Northern Division (SDPD) will share valuable information regarding beach, boating and fireworks safety.

The July Fourth holiday brings thousands of visitors to San Diego’s popular beaches, and larger crowds mean more rescues by SDFD lifeguards. Mission Bay is one of the top destinations for aquatic enthusiasts, especially during holiday weekends. In addition, all personal-use fireworks are illegal throughout San Diego County. Fireworks are dangerous, especially for children, and they pose a dangerous fire hazard.

**“Lifeguards and police officers patrolling our beaches, particularly Mission Bay, want everyone to have safe and enjoyable experiences,” said Lifeguard Chief James Gartland. “With the increase in visitors on this holiday, we want to make sure those who participate in aquatic activities know the safest places to swim or surf as well as the safety requirements for equipment such as personal watercraft. We have seen an increase in illegal vessel rentals and want to warn the public about those risks.”**

**“Our goal is to educate San Diegans and visitors about the risks of using illegal fireworks,” said Fire Chief Colin Stowell. “We want everyone to enjoy their Fourth of July free from injuries and to keep people from spending time in the hospital.”**

With more than 40 miles of oceanfront and bay shoreline to patrol throughout the city, SDFD lifeguards help keep an average of 17 million visitors safe and conduct an estimated 7,000 rescues at local beaches each year. Additionally, lifeguards manage cliff, scuba and swift water rescues, enforce boating safety regulations and respond to emergencies involving seafaring vessels and other watercraft. SDPD has a full-time beach team whose members patrol the sand, boardwalks and Mission Bay.

**WHAT:** Media availability

**WHO:** Chief James Gartland, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Lifeguard Division

Capt. Maureen Hodges, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Lifeguard Division  
Lt. Lonnie Stephens, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Lifeguard Division  
Lt. Rick Strobel, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Lifeguard Division  
Capt. Benjerwin Manansala, San Diego Police Department Northern Division  
Lt. David Brecht, San Diego Police Department Northern Division  
Firefighter/Paramedic Mark Alvarez, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department  
Capt. Alma Lowry, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department  
Tessa Haviland, Acting Executive Director, Burn Institute

**WHEN:** Thursday, June 29, 2023, 9 – 11 a.m.

**WHERE:** Ski Beach Boat Launch  
1600 Vacation Rd.  
San Diego, CA 92109

**VISUALS:** SDFD lifeguard and police vehicles on display.  
Illegal fireworks display board.  
Lifeguards, SDFD and SDPD will be available for interviews from 9 to 11 a.m.  
Burn Institute representative with burn prevention information.  
No podium or news conference; individual interviews will be provided.

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