



## **BEACH AND WATER SAFETY**

San Diego Police Department

July 19, 2016

In an effort to avoid tragic accidents, San Diego lifeguards ask anyone coming to the beaches and coastal areas to follow these safety tips:

- Learn to swim, take formal lessons.
- Set water safety rules for your family.
- Follow regulations and lifeguard directions.
- Never turn your back to the ocean, you may be swept from tide-pool areas by waves that can come without warning.
- Swim near a lifeguard.
- Never swim alone.
- Don't swim while under the influence of illicit drugs, medications that may cause impairment, or alcohol.
- Call or wave for help if you are in trouble.
- Swim parallel to shore if you plan to swim long distances.
- If caught in a rip current, swim sideways until free of the current. Don't swim against the pull of the current.
- Protect your head, neck and spine -- don't dive into unfamiliar waters -- feet first, first time.
- Scuba dive only if trained and certified, and stay within the limits of your experience and training.
- Report hazardous conditions to lifeguards or other beach management personnel.
- Stay clear of coastal bluffs as they can collapse and cause injury.
- Take water safety, CPR, and first-aid classes so you can keep your children safe in the water.
- Give your children swimming lessons and teach them water safety.
- Supervise children closely, even when lifeguards are present. Be alert. Don't read or text when watching them.
- Don't leave your children under the supervision of another child.
- Keep children within an arm's reach if they can't swim. You are their first line of defense against drowning.
- An adult should be in charge of watching kids in a pool. They should practice the 10/20 rule, which is to scan the pools every 10 seconds and be able to get to a child in distress in 20 seconds.
- The adult in charge should have a phone handy in case someone needs immediate medical attention. And the address should be posted in an obvious spot so it can be given to the emergency dispatcher.
- Don't rely on flotation devices, such as rafts or inner-tubes. Even jackets approved by the US Coast Guard are not a substitute for swimming ability. But they should be used by children who can't swim.
- Prohibit horseplay and dangerous dives in a pool.
- Enclose pools completely with a fence to restrict access to the area. Keep the fence clear of anything a child might use to climb on to get over the fence. Consider installing wireless outdoor sensors that will alert you via phone or with a chime inside your home if the sensors are activated.
- Never leave water in a kiddie pool in your yard. Small children can easily fall in and drown in shallow water.
- Before boating, review safe boating practices and posted rules. Never consume alcohol while driving a boat.
- Check that there are enough life preservers for everyone on board. Children under 12 years of age must wear a life preserver at all times. Anyone who can't swim should also wear one.
- Anyone riding on or operating a Jet Ski/Personal Watercraft (PWC) must also wear a life preserver. You must be 16 or older to operate a PWC by yourself. Maintain at least 100 ft from all other vessels or docks, and no spraying.