



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Spring Break Safety at City of San Diego Beaches and Mission Bay

BOATING SAFETY AND ILLEGAL VESSEL RENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SD FIRE-RESCUE LIFEGUARDS AND SDPD

SAN DIEGO – On Thursday morning, March 25, 2021, the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department's (SDFD) Lifeguard Division and members of the San Diego Police (SDPD) Harbor Unit will share crucial information regarding boating safety and illegal vessel rentals on Mission Bay.

Spring Break begins in many cities on March 27 and SDFD lifeguards see an increase in beach activity at Mission Bay, one of the top destinations for aquatic enthusiasts. There has already been an increase in the number of visitors to San Diego beaches because of the great weather.

"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 because of Spring Break, we want to make sure those who visit Mission Bay to participate in aquatic activities know the safety requirements for equipment as well as appropriate conduct. We have also seen an increase in illegal vessel rentals and want to warn the public about this issue."

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: Lt. Lonnie Stephens, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Lifeguard Division
Lt. Rick Aguilar, San Diego Police Department Northern Division

WHEN: Thursday, March 25, 2021, 9–11:30 a.m.

WHERE: Lifeguard Headquarters

2581 Quivira Ct.
San Diego, CA 92109

VISUALS:

Individual interviews with lifeguard and PD personnel from approximately 9-9:45 a.m. This may be completed more quickly in which case the boat tour can start earlier.

Pool camera opportunity – Fox 5 photographer will spend about 1.5 hours on a lifeguard boat with Lt. Stephens. One still photographer will be offered the same on the SDPD boat. Departure is from the City's dock at Lifeguard HQ. The boats will tour Mission Bay for shots of boating/kayaking/personal water craft activity and interactions between City personnel and the public.

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