

## BEACH SAFETY TIPS

- Never swim alone.
- Always swim near an open lifeguard station.
- If you are at a beach where there are no lifeguards, be cautious at all times. Remember swimming in waves is not the same as in a pool or lake. If in doubt-don't go out!
- Obey all instructions and orders from lifeguards. Lifeguards are trained to identify potential hazards. Ask a lifeguard about the conditions before entering the water. This is part of their job.
- Pay especially close attention to children and elderly when at the beach. Even in shallow water, wave action can cause loss of footing.
- Never dive into shallow water-Remember "feet-first every time".
- Use swim fins and a leash whenever body-boarding.
- Keep at least 100-feet away from piers, jetties, and rocks because permanent rip currents often exist along side these structures. Remember to always obey warning signs.
- Never throw sand and always fill in holes before you leave the beach.
- Please do-not litter-leave the beach cleaner than you found it!
- Protect yourself from the sun-use sunscreen, wear a hat and sunglasses.
- Respect other beach patrons and remember your beach manners.
- Bicycle paths along the beach are like roads-So always look both ways before walking across.
- If you or someone in your group gets lost, tell the nearest lifeguard.



## Inshore Holes

- Inshore holes are very dangerous to non-swimmers and small children because they can be swept into deep water quickly.
- Inshore holes are caused by relentless wave action on the sandy bottom off out beaches. Sand is pushed off shore during winter months. Surf, pushes it back toward the beach.
- Inshore holes causes uneven bottom contours that result in a dangerous condition where a beach patron can be standing in waist-deep water one moment, and step into a deep inshore hole the next.
- Inshore holes can be very deep, and the person may not be able to touch bottom.
- Inshore holes are sometimes just long trenches along the beach, but at other times they are characterized by deep color and flattened wave action.
- Inshore holes often turn into channels that can also cause rip currents.

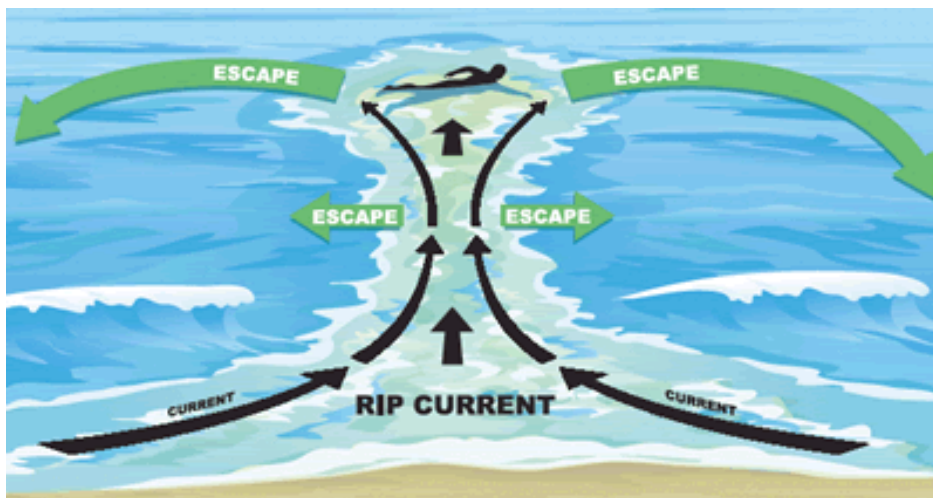
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## Rip Currents

A rip current can pull you away from the shoreline. If this happens:

- Remain calm to conserve energy and think clearly.
- Never fight against the current. Think of it like a treadmill that cannot be turned off, which you need to step to the side of.
- Swim out of the current in a direction following the shoreline. When out of the current, swim at an angle--away from the current--towards shore.
- If you are unable to swim out of the rip current, float or calmly tread water. When out of the current, swim towards shore.
- If you are still unable to reach shore, draw attention to yourself by waving your arm and yelling for help.

### How to Avoid and Survive Rip Currents



*Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Field Research Facility at Duck, NC.*

### Ask The Lifeguard

- Always ask the lifeguard where it is safe to swim before going into the ocean.
- The lifeguard is the beach safety expert and is highly-trained in spotting both inshore holes and rip currents.

*\*Some material obtained from the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) and [Los Angeles County Fire Department](#)*