



## break the grip of the rip

### SURVIVING A RIP CURRENT

Do not panic and do not fight the current! Swim out of the current in a direction following the shoreline. When out of the current, swim towards shore. If you are unable to swim out of the current, float or calmly tread water. If you are unable to reach shore, draw attention to yourself; face the shore, wave your arms and yell for help. If you see someone in trouble, get help from a lifeguard or call 911. Throw the victim something that floats and yell instructions on how to escape. Remember, many people drown while attempting to save others in a rip current.

**fact** Rip currents cause over 100 drownings every year in the U.S.A.

**80%** of ocean water rescues on surf beaches are results of rip currents

### RIP CURRENT MYTHS

Rip currents do not pull people under; rather, they pull people away from shore. Drowning occurs when people caught in a rip current are unable to keep themselves afloat to swim to shore. This may be due to any combination of fear, panic, exhaustion, or lack of swimming skills.

## lightning

### DANGER FROM ABOVE

Lightning is the number-one cause of storm related deaths. Most victims are children and young men between the ages of 10 to 35. As many as 20% of those struck will die, but anybody is vulnerable. What can you do to reduce the danger? **If you hear it, fear it! If you see it, flee it!** Follow the National Weather Service's 30-30 rule: if you hear thunder 30 seconds of seeing lightning, seek shelter immediately! It is best to be in a completely enclosed structure. If you are in an automobile, be sure it has a hard roof and keep the windows up. After the storm has passed, wait 30 minutes before going outside again. This will help reduce the possibility of being struck. Also, heed the lifeguard's warning about approaching storms. They often have sophisticated lightning warning equipment as well as the experience to know when storm trouble is brewing.

## Be Seen. Be Safe. Swim Near a Lifeguard

### LIFEGUARD STAND LOCATIONS IN THE OUTER BANKS

#### Corolla

MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY | 10AM-6PM

Headwind Way	Bonito St.	Sea Bird Way
Franklyn St.	Sailfish St.	Sand Fiddler
Austin St.	Orion's Way	Marlin Way
Sturgeon St.	Crown Point Cir.	Sand Hill
Herring St.	Driftwood Way	Old Stoney Rd.
Audobin Dr.		

#### Duck

MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY | 10AM-6PM

Sprigtail Dr.	Schooner Ridge Dr.	Scarborough Ln.
Barrier Island	Four Seasons Dr.	Plover Dr.

#### Southern Shores

MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY | 10AM-6PM

Hillcrest St.	Chicahawk St.
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#### Kitty Hawk

MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY | 10AM-6PM

Byrd St.	Eckner St	Kitty Hawk BH
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#### Kill Devil Hills

MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY | 10AM-5:30PM

Helga St.	Ashville Dr.	Clark St.
Hayman Blvd.	Woodmere Ave.	Martin St.
Avalon Beach	Carlow Ave.	Atlantic St.
5th St.	Ocean Bay Blvd.	Neptune Dr.
3rd St.	Oregon Ave.	Lake Dr.
2nd St.	Baum St.	8th St.
1st St.		

#### Nags Head

MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY | 10AM-6PM

Albatross St.	Epstein BH	Hargrove St.
Bonnett St.	Forrest St.	Ida St.
Hollowell St.	Gray Eagle St.	Juncos St.
Enterprise St.	Gulfstream St.	

#### National Park Service

MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY | 9AM-5PM

Coquina Beach	Buxton Beach	Ocracoke Beach
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MESSAGE PRODUCED BY: Professional Lifeguards of the Outer Banks and the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau



The Outer Banks  
OF NORTH CAROLINA  
outerbanks.org

# Outer Banks

## BEACH + SAFETY

BEACH PATRON GUIDE TO A FUN & SAFE OUTER BANKS VACATION

## rules to live by

**SWIM NEAR A LIFEGUARD.** Swimming in a guarded area greatly reduces the risk of drowning.

**LEARN TO SWIM.** This is the best defense against drowning. Teach children at an early age.

**NEVER SWIM ALONE.** Have someone on shore watching you.

**SWIM SOBER.** Alcohol and swimming don't mix.

**DON'T USE A FLOAT WHERE YOU CAN'T SWIM.** Non-swimmers should not use flotation devices in areas too deep to stand. These floats can deflate or be lost in the surf.

**DON'T DIVE HEAD-FIRST.** Always check for the depth and obstructions before diving.

**APPLY SUNSCREEN EARLY AND OFTEN.** Sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes prior to exposure to the sun and have at least a SPF 15 rating.

**LEASH YOUR BOARD.** Surfboards and bodyboards should only be used with a leash. With a leash the user will not become separated from the flotation device.

**OBEY THE WARNING FLAGS, LIFEGUARDS AND RULES OF THE BEACH.**

*"Keep your feet in the sand... until the lifeguard's in the Stand!"*

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Professional Lifeguards of the Outer Banks & the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau

**FOR EMERGENCIES  
DIAL 911**

## danger of digging holes

Digging holes on the beach is dangerous because sand is both heavy and unstable. When a collapse occurs, rescue attempts are hindered because as sand is being removed to free the victim the hole will continue to collapse on itself, making a successful rescue very difficult. Apart from the potential for suffocation, holes create potential danger the lifeguards patrolling the beach and people walking on the beach.

**fact** Nationally, there are more sand-hole collapse fatalities than shark attack fatalities.

1990 to 2006  
16 HOLE COLLAPSE VS 12 SHARK ATTACK

Informing beach patrons of the dangers of digging holes on the beach to prevent a possible tragedy is our way of being proactive instead of waiting for a collapse to occur.

### HELP PREVENT HOLE COLLAPSE DANGERS BY:

- Not digging a hole beyond knee deep
- Not leaving a hole unattended
- Filling in your hole when finished

## ocean life

When people think about wildlife in the ocean, they most often think about fish, sharks and dolphins. Those creatures, with many others, form a large and diverse group. The three main groups are:



### BONY FISHES

These include everything from the tiny goby (as small as 3/8 of an inch long) to the massive tuna (weighing as much as 1500 lbs.). Nearly all bony fishes are harmless to humans but there are exceptions. Although rare barracuda, bluefish and jacks have been known to cause injury. When in the presence of these fish (or schools of bait fish), it is best to stay out of the water.



### CARTILAGINOUS FISHES

These fishes include sharks, sting rays and skates. Despite a fearsome reputation, sharks cause fewer injuries or death worldwide than are caused by dog bites, bee stings or even lightning strikes. Stingrays are generally harmless unless stepped on, but can inflict painful injuries if that occurs. Skates are not known to be harmful.



### CETACEANS

This group includes dolphins, porpoises and whales. Any of these may be seen near shore, but the bottlenose dolphin is the most likely candidate, as they are the most abundant species of dolphin from Cape Cod to the Gulf of Mexico.

## surviving the heat at the beach

While enjoying the beach, your body is working to maintain its normal internal temperature of 98.6 degrees. When it's cool outside, your body tries to conserve heat. When it is hot or your physical activity increases, your body works hard to decrease its internal heat.

**HEAT CRAMPS** are painful muscle spasms that usually occur in the legs and abdomen after exercising for too long. **Treatment:** Place person in a cool place, drink fluids and massage the affected muscles.

**HEAT EXHAUSTION** is more serious. The symptoms may include sweating, cool, pale, moist skin, fatigue, nausea, headache and dizziness, and in more serious cases, vomiting and loss of consciousness. **Treatment:** Place person in cool place, replacing fluids as tolerable, treat for shock by laying the victim down and elevating their legs. Then cool the victim by applying wet towels or by fanning.

**HEAT STROKE** is the most serious of all heat disorders and a life-threatening emergency – call 911 immediately. The symptoms include hot, red, dry skin, very high body temperature and dizziness or loss of consciousness. Prevention- Be safe while it is hot outside, don't stay out too long, seek shade, wear sunscreen and eye protection, and drink plenty of fluids. **Treatment:** Follow the heat exhaustion care, except give nothing by mouth. If you suspect any of the symptoms related to heat stroke, seek help from a lifeguard immediately. They are trained to handle these and other medical situations.

## obey warning flags

**RED NO SWIMMING** flags indicated that the water is closed to the public.



**YELLOW CAUTION** flags indicate the presence of strong currents and extreme caution is urged.

## sea turtles

**DO YOUR PART!** Sea Turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act, 1973. Keep the beach dark during sea turtle nesting season May to August. Sea turtles will crawl up on the beach at night, dig a hole and deposit their eggs on the beach above the high tide line. Each nest contains about 100 eggs and hatch in 55-80 days. Help the sea turtles and other wildlife, by picking up discarded trash and keeping the beach litter free. Plastics (bags, rings, balloons, etc.) and cigarette butts are mistakenly eaten and cause death.

**SEA TURTLES ON THE OUTER BANKS** Loggerheads (most common in North Carolina), Greens, Kemp's Ridley, and Hawksbill | Leatherbacks



**N.E.S.T.**  
NETWORK FOR ENDANGERED SEA TURTLES  
OUTER BANKS, NC

**The Network for Endangered Sea Turtles (N.E.S.T.)** is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization of people who support the preservation of sea turtles and their habitat on the Outer Banks. Report dead, injured, stranded turtles or nests immediately.

**N.E.S.T. 24-Hour Hotline • 252-441-8622**

## respect the ocean dwellers

When interacting with any of the ocean's creatures, use common sense. They are wild animals and must be treated with respect. Remember, when you step into the ocean, you are entering into their world.



### STING RAYS

are usually are not dangerous or aggressive, but easily frightened. Often buried in the sand, in shallow water they can be accidentally stepped on, rays flip their tail and can result in the barb lacerating the skin. **Prevention:** Shuffle your feet to avoid surprising rays. Stings can be painful, and sometimes severe. Immediately seek first-aid treatment from a lifeguard or call 911 if you are stung.



### SEA LICE

Found during the warm summer months, these tiny pests are the larvae stage of the thimble jellyfish. They can cause itching and rashes lasting one to three days. **Prevention:** Ask the lifeguard if sea lice are present. If you do go in the water, shower and change your suit immediately after swimming. **Treatment:** Hydrocortisone creme or an oral antihistamine such as Benadryl.



### JELLYFISH

A pest found in both the ocean and sound water. Usually clear or pink in color, jellyfish stings cause mild to moderate discomfort. **Treatment:** diluted vinegar or warm water are used to treat jellyfish stings.



### BAITFISH

are schools of fish who gather in groups for safety. They are the main food source for larger fish species including sharks. If you see schools of baitfish in the ocean, get out of the water until the fish leave the area.



### SHARKS

are found in all North Carolina coastal waters. Shark attacks are very rare, usually occurring in murky water and/or where schooling fish are located.

