



PRESS RELEASE
CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAN CLEMENTE BEACHES CLOSED AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE

May 2, 2017....San Clemente, California...In response to a shark attack near San Onofre State Beach on Saturday, the City of San Clemente's Marine Safety Division enforced a closure of all San Clemente beaches. The State Lifeguards enforced a beach closure from Trail 6 to San Clemente's public beaches.

The beaches in San Clemente remained closed yesterday as a precautionary measure due to the attack and an additional shark sighting by the San Clemente Pier late Sunday afternoon. A local fisherman reported the shark, which was estimated to be about 11-feet long. There was also a report by State Lifeguards of aggressive shark behavior at Upper Trestles Sunday in which a shark chased surfers out of the water. The City had planned to reopen San Clemente beaches this morning; however, late yesterday, the Orange County Fire Authority helicopter was flying down the coast and spotted a pack of 9 great white sharks just outside the surf line at Capistrano Beach. "Based upon the distance of those sharks to San Clemente and their length, we have decided to keep the City's beaches closed and then reevaluate the closure mid-morning using our shark policy as our guide," said City Manager James Makshanoff.

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City lifeguards follow a county-wide protocol and respond by closing the beaches if there is a perceived danger to the public. This protocol is one that is agreed upon by all county lifeguard chiefs and state lifeguards. The City's number one goal is to keep people safe, and reminds residents and visitors to be mindful that the ocean is a vast marine habitat. It is also imperative that we consider the safety of first responders; and, therefore, the City asks that the public be mindful of the signage posted on the beach and stay out of the water.

Lifeguards are on duty and red flag warnings notifying the public of hazardous conditions are visible along the beaches. The City encourages the public to report shark sightings, or any other threat, to lifeguards at the Marine Safety Headquarters building just north of the Pier or to the Pier lifeguard tower, which is manned seven days a week. Marine Safety can be reached at (949) 361-8219 and Sheriff's Dispatch at (949) 770-6011 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The City reminds the beach-going public of these safety tips to help reduce your risk of sharks:

- Do not swim too far from shore
- Stay in groups – sharks are more likely to attack a solitary individual
- Avoid being in the water during darkness or twilight when sharks are most active
- Don't go in the water if bleeding from a wound -- sharks have an acute sense of smell
- Leave the shiny jewelry at home – the reflected light resembles fish scales
- Avoid brightly-colored swimwear – sharks see contrast particularly well

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