

# News Advisory



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 22, 2005

Alex Peabody

(831) 649-7132

(831) 402-7805

## Public Safety Advisory

### ***High Surf Expected over the Thanksgiving Weekend***

***Powerful Surf Could Surprise and Endanger Those Enjoying Unseasonably Warm Fall***

California State Parks' Lifeguards are warning that a powerful storm system located thousands of miles away could put Thanksgiving holiday visitors along California's coastline at risk.

In recent days, the weather has been unseasonably warm, with the coastal surf being unseasonably calm, attracting thousands of late season beach visitors. However, a storm system from the Northwestern Pacific area is forecast to produce a large surf along the California coastline beginning Friday, November 25, peaking on Saturday, before slowly declining on Sunday. The largest surf is forecasted for the Central and Northern California coastal areas.

Surf conditions at beaches that receive northwesterly swells will be prone to strong rip currents from the large surf. The public is warned that these hazardous conditions will affect swimming, wading, and other ocean sports and recreation. Please check your local state park office, lifeguard headquarters, or NOAA Weather radio for the updated local information and conditions.

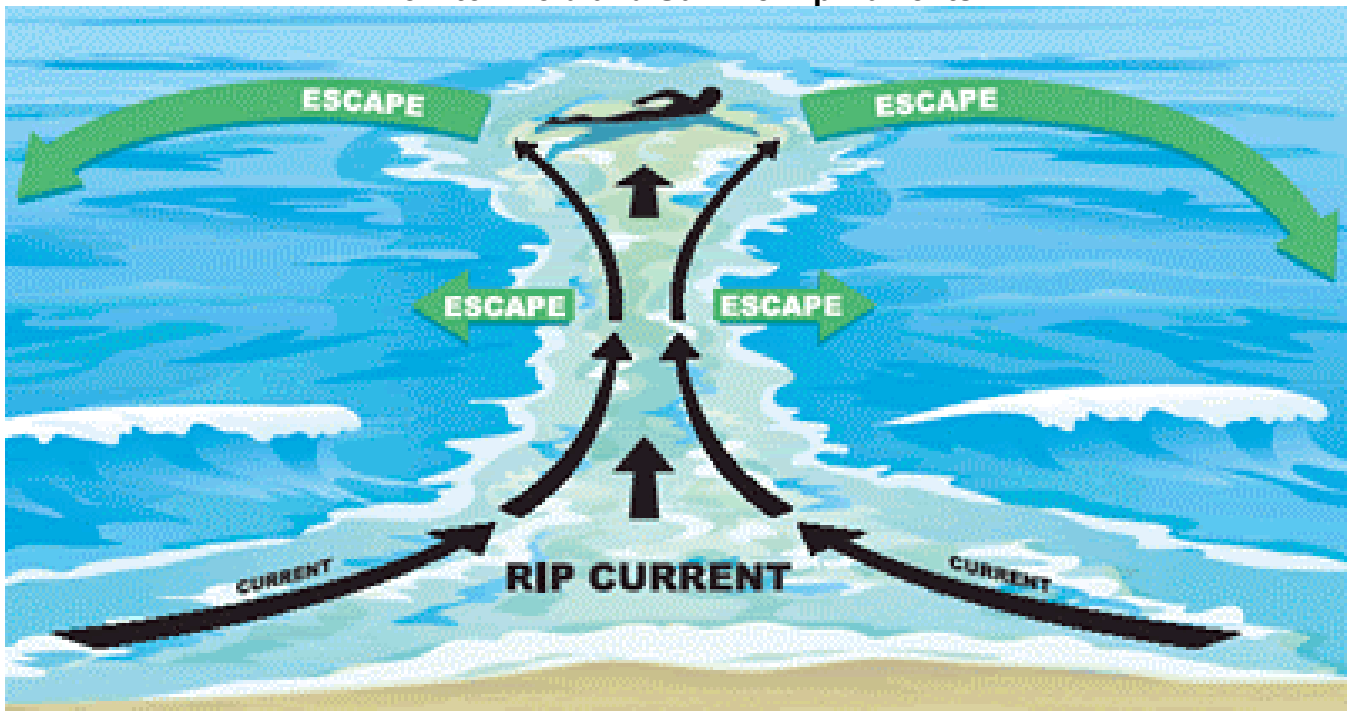
There will be periods of long lulls between sets of waves and many areas may seem safe from large surf. The waves will arrive in sets with the strongest rip currents being generated at the conclusion of these sets. Beaches and rocky areas that appear safe may suddenly be washed over by strong, roiling whitewater after a large set of waves.

"Every year, tragic drownings occur along our coast when people unfamiliar with the ocean, place themselves in dangerous areas where they are overwhelmed by large surf," said Alex Peabody, Aquatic Specialist for California State Parks. "We want visitors to know that the calm they are seeing and enjoying now is going to drastically change during this holiday season and all who go to the coastline to enjoy this unseasonably warm weather need to be warned."

Peabody recommends that the public, "Be preventative when visiting the beach. Enjoy the Thanksgiving weekend, but watch out for this potentially dangerous surf. Watch from a distance, not up close, and always swim near a lifeguard."

For more information about rip currents and ocean safety visit: [www.parks.ca.gov/aquaticsafety](http://www.parks.ca.gov/aquaticsafety)

Rip Current Diagram: Courtesy of [www.usla.org](http://www.usla.org)  
**How to Avoid and Survive Rip Currents**



**Learn how to swim!**

- Never swim alone.
- Be cautious at all times, especially when swimming at unguarded beaches. If in doubt, don't go out!
- Whenever possible, swim at a lifeguard protected beach.
- Obey all instructions and orders from lifeguards.
- If caught in a rip current, remain calm to conserve energy and think clearly.
- Don't 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 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: face the shore, wave your arms, and yell for help.
- If you see someone in trouble, get help from a lifeguard. If a lifeguard is not available, have someone call 9-1-1. Throw the rip current victim something that floats and yell instructions on how to escape. **Remember, many people drown while trying to save someone else from a rip current.**

###