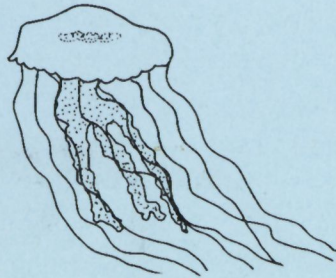


IN 1986, FOUR PEOPLE WERE KILLED BY A LIGHTNING STRIKE AS THEY HUDDLED UNDER A BEACH UMBRELLA IN OCEAN CITY.

During a storm the entire protected beach will be closed. Use your car for shelter.

During the rare occasion of a shark sighting, the beach may be closed to entry. A closure may also occur if a school of bluefish are in a "feeding frenzy" in the protected beach. The beach is not closed when the harmless porpoises or dolphins come near the shore.

THERE IS NO CONFIRMED RECORD OF A SHARK ATTACK ALONG THE DELMARVA PENINSULA.



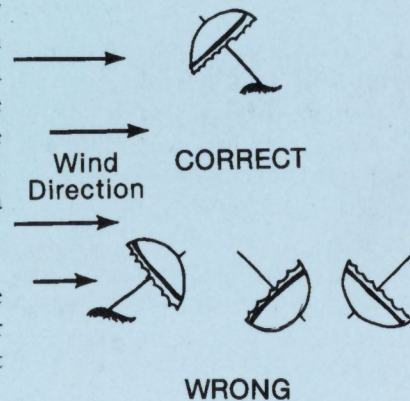
Most jellyfish at Assateague will not sting but some do, particularly those with color. Be safe—do not touch any jellyfish. If a ranger or lifeguard is not available for first aid, you can wash the area with salt water or diluted vinegar. Badly stung persons should receive medical treatment.

Each year a number of visitors get sun "poisoning" from overexposure. Watch your children. Use clothing, umbrellas, and sunscreens. Most lotions and oils wash off in the water—take precautions when you come out.

ONE YEAR A BOY WAS SEVERELY INJURED WHEN HE WAS IMPALED IN THE CHEST BY A BEACH UMBRELLA.

An umbrella blown across the beach by the wind may cause an accident. When strong or gusty winds blow, umbrella tops should be set facing the wind. Make sure a good sized hole is dug and the umbrella is planted firmly in the sand. Pile sand around the pole to give it extra support.

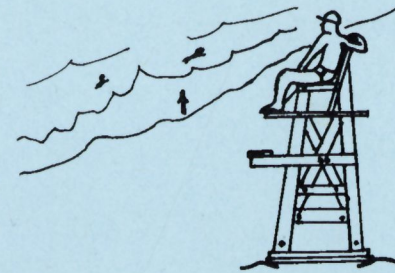
Set up your umbrella away from the front of the lifeguard stands and far enough back from the water so you don't block the lifeguard's view.



NPS LIFEGUARDS SUPERVISE PROTECTED BEACHES IN THE MARYLAND AND VIRGINIA SECTIONS OF ASSATEAGUE ISLAND. ASSATEAGUE STATE PARK ALSO HAS A PROTECTED BEACH IN MARYLAND.

FOR A SAFE RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCE, LOCATE YOUR EQUIPMENT NEAR AN ON DUTY LIFEGUARD.

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OCEAN LIFEGUARDING, ATTEND ONE OF OUR SURF RESCUE DEMONSTRATIONS.



FIRST AID AND RESCUE. The lifeguard operation is equipped with rescue equipment and first aid supplies. The staff is trained and certified in lifesaving, first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

FLAGS. Green, Yellow and Red Flags on tall poles indicate ocean conditions and also designate the lifeguarded area. Visitors who want to utilize lifeguard service should recreate between the conditional flags.

A Yellow Flag with th black circle is placed beyond the lifeguarded area. No fishing and no rigid craft is permitted between the two yellow-black circle flags.

Green Flags represent normal ocean conditions. When these flags are flying, visitors should exercise normal care and caution.

Yellow Flags indicate a warning: moderate surf, currents and marine life such as jelly fish may be present. Enhanced care and caution should be exercised.

Red Flags indicate a high hazard; rough conditions such as strong surf and currents are present. Those entering the water should take great care.

Double Red Flags indicate a beach closure is in effect.

RULES.

1. Flotation devices are prohibited within the lifeguarded area except for U.S. CoastGuard approved life-vests.
2. Pets are prohibited within the protected area.
3. Glass containers are prohibited.
4. Rigid crafts and fishing are prohibited within the lifeguarded area.

WHEN YOU HEAR THE WHISTLE. In the lifeguarded area, lifeguards will not signal swimmers simply because they are in deep water. The Lifeguards will signal swimmers toward shore because they are approaching a sand bar, because they are approaching a hazardous area, or they are moving too far out for adequate supervision.

FOR OUR HANDICAPPED GUESTS. Handicapped individuals who require special consideration in aquatic recreation may want to use the protect beach. Beach Wheelchairs are available in both the Maryland and Virginia district beaches. Individuals who would like to use the beach wheelchair should contact a lifeguard for direction and assistance.

SURF RESCUE DEMONSTRATIONS.

Virginia District: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10:00 am

Maryland District: Monday, Thursday and Saturday 10:00 am

Assateague Island



SURF SAFETY

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

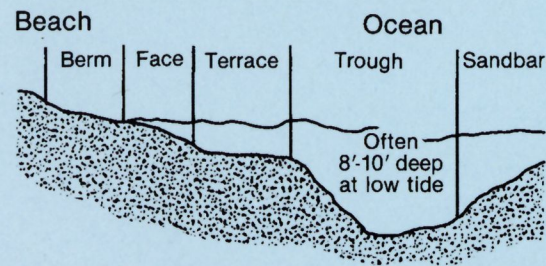


You may forget your cares during a leisurely day at the beach. But even a beautiful beach has dangers—especially for the unaware. Whether "catching some rays" or plunging in the surf, the information in this brochure is designed to help you enjoy the fun and avoid the dangers.

WHEN IN DOUBT!!

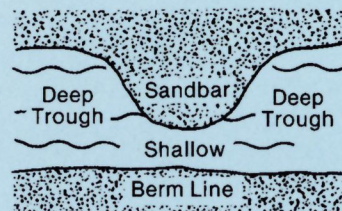
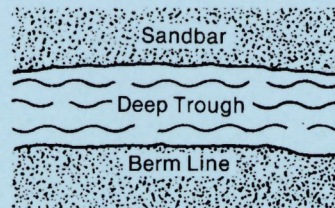
- stop at the visitor center
- read regulations posted along beach walkways
- examine bathhouse exhibits
- look at the information sign on the lifeguard beach
- ask a lifeguard or ranger.

SHORE TOPOGRAPHY



The beach face and terrace change. A beach face may be steep or narrow. The trough beyond the terrace to the sandbar may contain ridges and dropoffs.

CHECK THE WATER DEPTH BEFORE YOU DIVE. SEVERE INJURIES MAY BE CAUSED IF YOU DIVE OR FALL FROM A FLOTATION DEVICE.



OFTEN, WHEN THE DEPTH IS ONLY WAIST DEEP ON A SANDBAR, THE WATER WILL BE OVER YOUR HEAD ON THE WAY OUT.

For your protection, people will be kept off the sandbar until it is reasonably safe for young people and poor swimmers, as well as taller adults and good swimmers, to access the sandbar.

DO NOT TAKE RISKS IF YOU DO NOT HAVE THE SKILLS TO HANDLE THOSE RISKS.

SAND ABRASIONS, BROKEN LIMBS AND DISLOCATED SHOULDERS ARE NOT UNCOMMON. SPINAL INJURIES WITH PERMANENT PARALYSIS MAY RESULT WHEN PEOPLE ARE THROWN TO THE BOTTOM. (DELMARVA BEACHES EXPERIENCE ONE OR TWO OF THESE INJURIES EACH YEAR.)

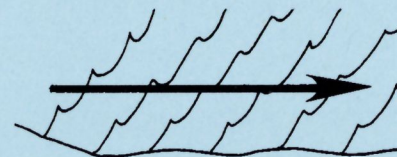
Onshore winds cause waves. Because ocean winds vary, waves change from day to day. All waves deserve respect. Bodysurfing and swim fins are allowed in the lifeguard protected beach—be careful! Do not try to ride waves that are too forceful for your level of skill.



To escape the wave's great force, duck under or retreat from breaking waves. If you are riding the wave in some fashion and are thrown off, try to prevent direct head and neck contact with the ocean floor. The protected beach may be closed if exceptionally strong surf is present.

VISITORS, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN, MAY BE MOVED RAPIDLY ALONG THE SHORE BY THE LITTORAL CURRENT.

LITTORAL CURRENTS

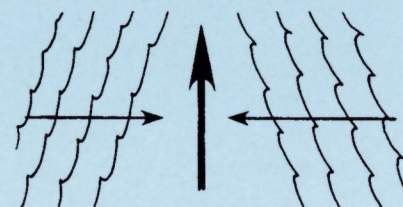


A current will move along the shore if waves come to shore at an angle. This littoral current is present on most days and may be strong. When lifeguards are on duty they will post the current speed each morning.

A SEAWARD CURRENT CAN CARRY A SWIMMER OUT FROM SHORE AND BE DIFFICULT TO SWIM AGAINST.

Though not as common as littoral currents, seaward currents can be dangerous. Do not panic if you get in one. Do not wear yourself out trying to swim against it. Normally they are not wide. Swim parallel with the shore a short distance and then swim to shore out of the current.

SEAWARD CURRENTS



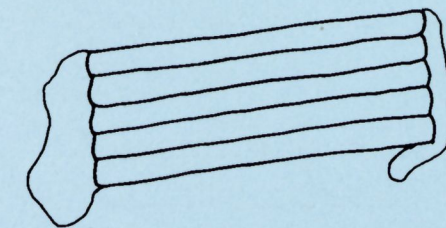
DO NOT BE EMBARRASSED TO CALL OR SIGNAL FOR HELP BEFORE YOU TIRE OR GET INTO SERIOUS TROUBLE.

Save your strength for your own rescue. If you cannot get to shore, float on your back and control your breathing. Call for help and put one arm up for attention. Do not put both arms out of the water. This will only exhaust you.

DO NOT ATTEMPT A RESCUE YOURSELF UNLESS THE SITUATION IS URGENT AND YOU ARE TRAINED FOR OCEAN RESCUE.



When you see someone in distress, find a lifeguard or ranger. We have radio communications and special beach vehicles for rescues.



MANY BEACH DROWNINGS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF INFLATABLE DEVICES.

Many people associate "safety" with flotation aids and feel safe when going out much farther than they should. Currents or wind can move an unsuspecting person into deep water or far offshore. This is an invitation to disaster; people may be separated from a float by waves, slipping off, or deflation.

Remember, flotation aids that move with the waves travel at considerable speed. The weight of a person on a speeding object may cause injury if there is a collision with another person or the beach bottom. Hard objects, such as surfboards, are especially hazardous.

For these reasons, Coast Guard approved flotation jackets are the only flotation devices allowed on the lifeguard protected beach. Air mattresses, inner tubes, body boards, skim boards, surfboards, and swimming aids must be used outside the protected beach area. We do not recommend the use of inflatables in the ocean.