

Riptides and rescues close Florida beach

by UPI

COCOA BEACH, Fla. - Lifeguards closed part of Cocoa Beach because of dangerous riptides that resulted in 200 rescues in a three-hour period.

Brevard County Ocean Lifeguard assistant chief Jeff Scarbozi told WKMG-TV that there were 200 rescues at Shepard Park beach between noon and 3 p.m. Saturday. Lifeguards closed the beach on Monday.

The riptides, which are fed by heavy surf breaking holes in sandbars, resulted in dozens of rescues and a few nervous parents at Daytona Beach.

"It is a risk for everyone," lifeguard Libby Michelini told WKMG. "It is a risk for strong swimmers and small children and we are really trying to make sure we don't have any bathers caught in those."

Two small children reported missing at Daytona Beach were found and reunited with their families.

"One of the frequent scenarios is that the children go into the water and this fairly strong north current takes them away from their parents' area and they go missing," Michelini told WKMG.

A man drowned while swimming with his family near the Cocoa Beach Pier Saturday night, beach patrol officers said.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Riptides and rescues close Florida beach by UPI