

FIRE DEPARTMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

Incident Number: 17-0087551
Information Contact: Douglas Miser, Fire Battalion Chief—(805) 641-9017
Incident Type: Ocean Rescue
Date/Time of Incident: 10-15-17 at 2:18 PM
Incident Location: Surfer's Knoll – 1600 Spinnaker Drive
Cause: Rip Current
Injuries: (general) 1 Major Medical, 1 Minor Medical
Number of Personnel: 4 Fire – 2 Port District Harbor Patrol - 2 Police – 1 State Lifeguard – 2 AMR
Fire/Police Equipment: 1 Engine, 1 Battalion Chief, 2 Police
Agencies Involved: Ventura Port District, Ventura City Fire Department, Ventura Police Department, State lifeguards, AMR

Narrative: The Fire Communications Center received a 911 call just after 2 pm Sunday afternoon for two swimmers in distress just down coast of Surfer's Knoll. A 21 year old female and her 12 year old sister were swimming just off the beach when they were caught by a rip current and were pulled from shore into deeper water and moderate sized surf. As they frantically swam towards the beach, the rip current continued to pull them further out to sea.

Chris Woodard, a 60 years old resident of Fillmore, was walking his dog on the beach when he spotted the two swimmers in distress. Dressed in street clothes, he ran into the water and fought his way to the younger sister, who managed to break free of the rip current and eventually made her way back to the beach-- and he then swam further out to find her older sister. The older sister was unconscious, face down, and not moving. Fortunately, the rip current had subsided. He managed to bring the young woman's head out of the water and made his way back to the beach with the victim. In shallow water, he started resuscitation efforts.

Ventura Port District Harbor Patrol made access to the beach, located the victim and the rescuer, and provided care with Ventura Fire Paramedics. Advanced life support was initiated on the older victim, who regained breathing was semi-conscious. The patient's younger sister, who was in mild distress, was also treated and evaluated. Harbor Patrol transported both victims off the beach to AMR Ambulance. Ventura Fire and AMR Paramedics transported both patients to a local hospital. The older patient was in serious condition. The rescuer, Chris Woodard, was doing fine after the call and was not in any distress, and was commended for his heroic efforts.

As a public safety reminder-- rip currents can be found at local beaches all year long, and always swim in front of a lifeguard. If you find yourself caught in a rip current, please swim parallel to the beach until you reach calm water, and then swim towards shore.

Due to HIPAA we are prevented from disclosing an individual's protected health information (PHI). We may not release information regarding patient's names, DOB, address, SS# or medical status.