

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



City of Duluth - Fire Department

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DATE: 6/5/2021

SUBJECT: Duluth Fire rescues swimmer from rip current

BY: Assistant Chief Dennis Edwards & Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

NATURE OF INCIDENT: Water Emergency

CASE NO.: 21-5850

INCIDENT DATE: 6/5/2021

INCIDENT TIME: 6:43 p.m.

INCIDENT LOCATION: 3100 block of Minnesota Avenue

Duluth Fire rescues swimmer from rip current

[Duluth, MN] At 6:43 p.m., the Duluth Fire Department responded to a water emergency call, of two teenagers being pulled into a rip current who were in distress of the 3100 block of Minnesota Avenue. The Fire Department and St. Louis County Rescue Squad units, who had just finished responding to a separate water emergency call was in the Duluth shipping canal when the call came in, and turned back into the lake to respond.

Before arrival, the DFD received additional information that a total of four teenage swimmers were in the water and had been pulled into Lake Superior by a rip current. The two teenage girls were able to self-rescue, and were back on the beach. The two males who had been swept into the current were still struggling. One of the males (Male A) was attempting to assist Male B but they were separated by the current. Male B was able to make his way back to shore, and was treated on-scene by Mayo ambulance.

While Male B had gotten back to shore, Male A had drifted further out into Lake Superior. The two had become separated by the large waves. When Marine 19 closed in on Male A, he was 350 feet from shore. A Marine 19 crew member who was dressed in a cold-water suit, jumped into the water to rescue the swimmer. The swimmer was assisted into Marine 19 and medically evaluated on the way back to shore.

"These situations can come up quickly, and are scary for all who are involved," said Assistant Chief Dennis Edwards. "There is no doubt in my mind that they saved this young man's life today, and in turn he probably saved his friend's life by helping to keep him above water for as long as he could."

This rescue effort was successful because of the collaboration between multiple agencies. St. Louis County Rescue Squad, St. Louis County Sheriff's Department, members of the Duluth Police Department, the U.S. Coast Guard, and Mayo Ambulance all responded, and played a part in this rescue response.

The Duluth Fire Department would like to remind the public, that conditions at the beach can change quickly. There was not a red flag warning in effect when this situation occurred. It's important to pay attention to water conditions, and currents when you are at the beach.

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