City of Del Mar
Community Services Department

CSA-17 Advisory Committee Presentation

October 27, 2026

Department History

- Established in 1965

- Community Services Department
  - Lifeguard Services
  - Enforcement Services
  - Open Space Operations

- Roughly 90 employees
  - 6 full time and 70 part time Lifeguards

- Open daily year-round





Lifeguard Operations

- 2.2 miles of Beach: Sandy beach from Powerhouse Park North to San Dieguito River-mouth. Cliff lined areas South from Powerhouse Park to Torrey Pines State Beach and north from River-mouth to Solana Beach.

- 17th Street Headquarters, 20th Street, and 25th Street Towers are stationary. 15th Street, 29th Street, and North Beach Towers are portable. 4 smaller portable towers to move to dangerous areas.

- Patrol beach via 4x4 trucks and ATVs. We operate Inflatable Rescue Boats for patrols and diving operations.



Department Operations

- Planning and permitting for over 300 public and private events in parks, City buildings, and beach each year
- Beach permits include local school PE and club programs, surf and volleyball camps
- Maintain public beach restrooms, Powerhouse Community Center, and Beach Safety Center
- Parking management and enforcement
- Enforcement of municipal code in parks, beach and the San Dieguito Lagoon



Lifeguard Operations

- Public safety through education – *Safe Fun in the Sun*
- Beach and Ocean Safety Presentations to local elementary, middle, and high schools (1,500 students)
- SALT-Surfers Awareness in Lifesaving Techniques- Teach local Surf PE, Surf Clubs, and Surf Teams
- AED's in all towers, beach trucks, and ATVs
- Jan – Sep 2026 stats:
  - 1,019 ocean rescues
  - 18,937 safety contacts
  - 6,480 enforcement contacts
  - 1,077 medical aids this year
  - Estimated 2.5 million visitors





Lifeguard Operations

- Beach and ocean safety, emergency medical care, enforcement of local laws for roughly 3 million beach patrons annually

- Capabilities include EMT's, SCUBA, Technical Rope Rescue, Technical Animal Rescue, and Swiftwater Rescue







Lifeguard Operations
Junior Lifeguard Program

- Junior Lifeguard Program:
- Four two week sessions
- 232 kids (60 kids in each session, 52 for the 4th)
- Super A’s: One week program for 14-15 year old's who are interested in becoming Ocean Lifeguards. This advanced group is introduced to advanced skills, CPR training, ocean rescue techniques, Inflatable Rescue Boats, swift-water, and mock interviews.



Coordinated Regional Approach

- Part of the EMS system with response efforts 24/7
- Training, coordination, and reciprocity with regional agencies
- SDR ALERT – Regional Aquatic Task Force
- California Chief's Association
- *United States Lifesaving Association*
- *California State Lifesaving Association*



Updates

- Preparation for El Niño impacts
  - Upcoming Swiftwater rescue class
- Focus on training for technical teams
  - Medical, Swiftwater, Ropes, IRB, SCUBA



Challenges

- El Niño extending busy season, increased storms
- Hiring qualified and motivated part-time staff
  - Wages (Student LG $17.92, LGI $21.41)
  - Off-season availability to supplement FT staff
- Public education and enforcement
  - Challenging interactions (dogs, alcohol, business)
- Maintaining and replacing equipment
- Maintaining beach access



Thank you

- Questions?

