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NOAA Produces Public Service Announcement for Safe Viewing of Seals and Sea Lions

LA JOLLA, Calif. – NOAA Fisheries is teaming up with several San Diego-area hotels to inform local residents and tourists how to enjoy San Diego’s stunning beaches without disturbing or harassing seals and sea lions that share the shore.

NOAA Fisheries has produced a [public service announcement \(PSA\)](#) with guidance on the best way to enjoy viewing them without disturbing or harassing the animals. The NOAA PSA will be hosted on selected local hotels in San Diego, and available to conservation NGOs, tour operators and others to inform the public on proper marine etiquette.

The campaign is especially timely following reports of sightseers getting dangerously close to marine mammals in the Children’s Pool area.

“This PSA informs those visiting the beach to avoid getting too close to seals or sea lions especially in the Children’s Pool area,” said Justin Viezbicke, NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region stranding coordinator. “By giving the animals adequate space to rest and recover we are protecting them as much as ourselves and our pets.”

Harbor seals and sea lions come up on the sand to rest, modulate their body temperature, nurse their young or give birth. Although they may appear docile they can, like other wild animals, bite and carry diseases that may be contagious to pets.

Like other marine mammals, sea lions and harbor seals are protected by the Marine Mammal Protection Act which makes it a federal offense to disturb them or do anything that may make them change their behavior.

Some of the tips the PSA provides are:

- Keep your distance. You’re too close if an animal starts to stare, fidget or flee.
- Seals on land are especially wary and may rush into the water or abandon their pups, threatening their survival.
- Keep pets away and on a leash. Pets can disturb or harm wildlife or separate mothers from their pups.

NOAA Fisheries invites hotels and other organizations to make broad use of the PSA. For more information please contact the number listed above.

If you see an injured or dead marine mammal, call 1-866-767-6114. Experts will ask you about the location and condition of the animal.

Links:

Share the Shore: Give Seals and Sea Lions Space Public Service Announcement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivl7oCJvyAI>