



Man drowns in Miami Beach surf

Man, woman caught in rip current

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MIAMI BEACH, Fla. -

A man died after he and another person had to be pulled from the rough ocean on Miami Beach on Sunday night.

According to Miami Beach Fire Rescue, the two were swimming off the beach near 77th Street. Witnesses saw that the couple was caught in a rip current about 50 feet offshore and called 911 at about 7:30 p.m., a Fire Rescue representative said.

Susan Anzalone said she was swimming with her friend George Knott.

"I said, 'How are you doing?'" Anzalone said. "He said he wasn't doing so good."

Knott, a good swimmer and ex-Navy adventurer had run out of strength to take on the rip currents.

"I realized we were getting farther away. We were in a rip current. I held him up, but couldn't do it very long," Anzalone said.

Anzalone, who knew to swim parallel to shore when getting caught in a rip current, lost sight of Knott and made it to shore.

She then began waving her hands and screaming for help. A good Samaritan who was onshore went into the water after Knott.

The good Samaritan also got in trouble with the rip current, officials said.

That's when Miami Beach Fire Rescue showed up and went into action.

One crew looked for Knott -- Tomas Vinuela's team swam out with a rescue buoy for that good Samaritan who was struggling some 100 yards offshore.

"We told him to hold onto the buoy, we're going to pull you in," Vinuela said.

"The safety rope wrapped around my neck. When I handed it to him, it had apparently wrapped around. So when he's pulling, he's pulling me down, and all I could do is grab onto it with this hand to pull it off my neck," Vinuela said.

Vinuela, finally freed, rope burned, and gulping for air, got them back to shore. But it would be 25 minutes before George Knott could be located. It was too late to save him.

Knott was unconscious and was given CPR and other lifesaving measures on the way to Mount Sinai Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

The good Samaritan was taken to a hospital and is expected to recover

Vinuela was also transported to a hospital and is in stable condition.

"I'm just really sad," Anzalone said. "I just wish we hadn't gone out."

"After 6 pm, the beach is not guarded by Ocean Rescue. That's the telling tale that you shouldn't go in after that," said Adonis Garcia with Miami Beach Fire Rescue.

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