



July 30,2020

Press release on suspected drowning.

On 7/30/2020 at 7:31 PM, first responders were dispatched to the New Buffalo City Beach to assist with a subject who had gone missing in the water near the US Corp of Engineers break wall. Rescuer's searched the water and the rocks in the break wall and were unable to locate the individual. Missing is a 24-year-old male from Villa Ridge Mo. who was a contractor working in the area.

The rescue effort involved the New Buffalo Police Marine Division, US Coast Guard, Chikaming Township Fire Department Water Rescue Unit, New Buffalo Fire Departments, Berrien County Sheriff's, Pokagon Tribal Police, and the Michiana Police Department. The USCG helicopter and the NBPD UAV were also used to do aerial searches for the missing subject.

The waves were nearly 6ft at the time of the incident and rip-tides were exceptionally strong. The high waves severely hindered the water rescue efforts. Two New Buffalo Police Officers suffered minor injuries while attempting to locate the victim from the break wall while the waves broke over it. At the time of this incident, other beachgoers had found themselves in distress in St Joseph and Lake Township causing multiple water related incidents throughout the County at the same time.

These incidents are a grim reminder that Lake Michigan is exceptionally dangerous whenever there are high waves because there ARE rip currents. Be sure to check the National Weather Service for Beach Hazard Statements and check the warning flags whenever it is a windy day at the beach.