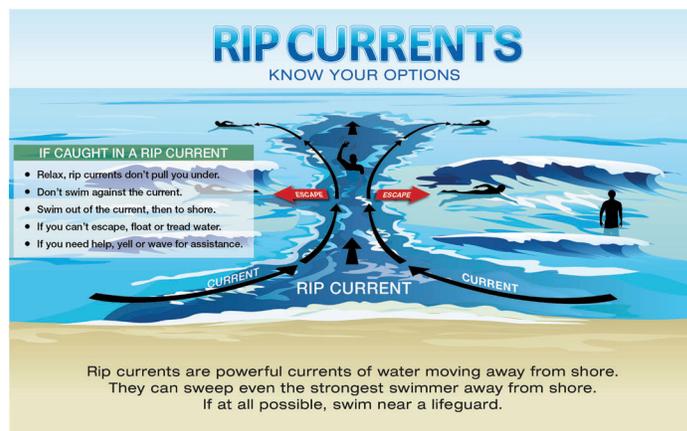




New York Sea Grant partnered with MARACOOS to create a Long Island-based network for rip current science and safety professionals

Long Island Rip Current Network

Rip currents are considered to be the number one beach hazard due to the number of fatalities that occur each year when beachgoers are pulled away from shore by the powerful fast-moving water. The National Ocean Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates that a rip current can move at a speed of eight feet per second. Many professionals in the fields of research, forecasting, safety, and education are working to further the understanding of rip current science to reduce the number of related incidents. Until now, these professionals on Long Island had had little to no cross-communication.



Graphic: NOAA Rip Current Safety Information for the Media (weather.gov)

In 2020, New York Sea Grant and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Association Coastal Ocean Observing System (MARACOOS) created the Long Island Rip Current Network (LIRN) as a framework for promoting collaboration and effective communications aimed at enhancing efforts, reducing duplication, and, ultimately, reducing rip current-related incidents.

The initial steps included developing a list of professionals to be included in the network. Over the summer of 2020, a survey was developed and distributed via email to gauge interest in the development of the network as well as to identify relevant topics for discussion at a workshop. The survey had a response rate of over 75%, and obtained important information, such as, the education of beachgoers being of highest interest to the rip current professionals. There was widespread interest in participating in the proposed network and in fostering relationships across Long Island and within the larger Mid-Atlantic region.

In the fall, NYSG and MARACOOS co-hosted the first LIRN Workshop. A dozen representatives from such sectors as academia, forecasting, municipalities, and lifeguard organizations participated in identifying clearly-defined goals for the new network and the next steps for its development. NYSG plans to host at least one more workshop before the summer 2021 beach season.

This network of rip current professionals on Long Island will work together to research, educate, and reduce the number of rip current-related fatalities that occur each year. Learn more at www.nyseagrant.org/ripcurrents.

Project Partners:

- Mid-Atlantic Regional Association Coastal Ocean Observing System

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is New York Resilient Communities and Economies.

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