

The poles on the beach have washed away. Let's make sure they stay away.

In addition to being a safety hazard, many of these poles have already been replaced numerous times since they were put up, due to their flawed design and placement on the beach. Replacing them once again will require taxpayers of Cape Canaveral to pay for something the U.S. Lifesaving Association has already declared to be an ill-advised safety hazard.

Providing only an illusion of safety, these floats are a danger for both rescuers and those who are drowning. These floats encourage unqualified people to attempt rescues in dangerous conditions, placing themselves in grave danger of drowning. Well-meaning people often drown trying to rescue others, a phenomenon all-too-familiar to lifeguards. According to the American Red Cross and the United States Lifesaving Association, an organization strongly opposed to these floats, untrained people should not attempt rescues themselves. Both agencies advise would-be rescuers to “reach or throw, but don’t go.”



The poles and floats provide the illusion that the beaches are somehow protected, thereby encouraging people to take greater risks in the water. Along with the grave risk to would-be rescuers, the illusion of protection for swimmers increases the likelihood of drownings. Perceiving incorrectly that the beaches are somehow protected, beach-goers will take greater risks than they would at clearly unguarded beaches.

These floats are an enormous waste of taxpayer money. As we have already seen, the floats will need constant replacement from weather exposure, and the poles regularly snap in the wind or wash away. At \$250 each for a cheap float on a PVC pole, someone is making a killing off these cheap devices at taxpayer expense, while placing innocent lives at risk.

The poles have prevented sea turtle nestings, tangled up kite surfers, and are a safety hazard for people walking on the beach at night. Sea turtles have failed to nest upon encountering these posts on the beach, and kite surfers and late night walkers have run afoul of them. They are an unmitigated hazard, with no redeeming value.

Keep these hazards away from the beaches of Cape Canaveral and Cocoa Beach, for the safety of both residents and visitors.



A sampling of agencies that advocate reach or throw, but don't go:

American Red Cross:

http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m44240110_Reach_or_throw_dont_go.pdf

http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m12140172_ABCs_of_Water_Safety.pdf

Drowning Prevention Coalition:

<http://discover.pbcgov.org/drowningprevention/Pages/Reach-Throw-DontGo.aspx>

U.S. Army:

<https://www.army.mil/article/51402/reach-throw-row-dont-go>

National Park Service:

<https://www.nps.gov/lake/learn/education/upload/Fifth%20grade.pdf>

YMCA:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/ymca-of-greater-seattle/this-summer-reach-throw-but-dont-go/10154036134076210/>

Pro First Aid:

http://www.profirstaid.com/training_video/pool-safety

NBC News:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/video/-reach-or-throw-don-t-go-and-other-swimming-safety-tips-993788483940>



SOUTHEAST
REGION

United States Lifesaving Association

Southeast Region

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POSITION STATEMENT

Due to the recent placement of rescue equipment being placed on unguarded beaches in Florida, the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) National Executive Committee and the USLA Southeast Region submit the following statement:

“Considering the potential for death or injury to citizen rescuers, we recommend adequate lifeguard staffing and that all people swim near a lifeguard. We do not support the deployment of lifeguard rescue devices at beaches to be used by citizen rescuers”

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Failed sea turtle nesting (false crawl) caused by encounter with pole.