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**TOWN OF CAROLINA BEACH**  
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## *News Release*

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For Immediate Release

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### **TOWN OF CAROLINA BEACH UPDATES INFORMATION REGARDING BITE INCIDENT WITH 13- YEAR-OLD GIRL**

CAROLINA BEACH, NC---The Town of Carolina Beach is taking extra safety measures today at area beaches following an incident yesterday in which a 13-year-old girl was bitten by an undetermined sea creature while swimming. All Town beaches are currently open to the public, however, people are being asked to be careful if they go to the beach or anytime when swimming. Today's weather in Carolina Beach is cloudy and rainy, so the number of beachgoers is down.

The town held a planning meeting this morning that included police and lifeguard staff regarding public safety in light of the incident. All lifeguards have been fully briefed on the situation and will be keeping a close watch on all aspects of the beach, including the waves, temperatures and winds. They have been instructed to keep detailed records of all activities and to report any sightings immediately.

Yesterday's incident involving the bite was the first of its kind reported in Carolina Beach this year. Local marine experts have said that this type of incident is very unusual in this area. Last year, there was a shark bite reported at Masonboro Island after a surfer jumped from his surf board.

At 5:23 p.m. yesterday (7/27/04), Carolina Beach Police responded to a 911 call and arrived at the Ocean Boulevard Beach Access to find some type of sea animal had bitten a 13-year-old girl. Her family was visiting the area from Severn, Maryland.

After the incident, people said they saw a shark in the area, however the Town has not yet been able to determine whether it was indeed a shark that attacked the girl. An investigation is underway to find out what type of animal caused the bite.

Witnesses told police the girl had been standing in about 3 feet of water at the time of the incident. She suffered deep lacerations to her forearm and wrist. After being initially treated by a rescue squad, the girl was transported to New Hanover Regional Medical Center.

The Town of Carolina Beach is withholding the girl's identity until permission to release the information is obtained from her parents.

**Some Safety Tips for Swimmers:**

1. Swim only under lifeguard supervision. Children and the elderly should be supervised at all times.
2. Do not go into the water with any open wounds. Sharks and other sea animals can detect blood in the water.
3. Do not wear loose or dangling jewelry in the water because it can attract the fish.
4. Do not swim at dawn or dusk since marine experts advise this is considered sea animals hunting and feeding time.

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