

Lifeguards Have To Rescue UC Surf Class

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CAPITOLA, Calif. -- A University of California, Santa Cruz surfing class got a lesson in rescue Tuesday morning when the waves at Capitola's Main Beach got a little too rough for five of the beginning surfers.

According to the Santa Cruz Fire Department, the 10-person class was in the water at the Capitola jetty, a spot well known as being a good break for beginners.

Fire officials said a strong current pushed six of the students near the end of the Capitola Esplanade, while four others were out in the water beyond the surf break.

A city of Capitola lifeguard swam out to the four and directed them around the current and a rope rescue was set up to pull the others who were stranded without their boards near a cliff at the Esplanade's end.

One of the six managed to swim to shore, while the other five were pulled in by rope, fire officials say. No one was injured.

The class, taught by UCSC Head Lifeguard Ian Culbertson, usually meets at Manresa Beach south of Aptos, but the waves there were reportedly too rough for the class on Tuesday.

Firefighters, Capitola lifeguards and officials from the State Department of Parks and Recreation all participated in the rescue.

UC Santa Cruz officials say the university is conducting an investigation to determine what the circumstances were and say "appropriate action will be taken."

If surfing conditions improve, the non-credit class will resume next Tuesday.

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