

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the placement of rip current
3 warning signs; creating s. 380.275, F.S.;
4 providing for a cooperative effort among state
5 agencies and local governments to plan for and
6 assist in the placement of rip current warning
7 signs; providing that the department shall
8 direct and coordinate the program; requiring
9 the development of a uniform rip current
10 warning sign; authorizing the department to
11 coordinate the distribution and erection of rip
12 current warning signs; providing for rules;
13 limiting the liability of participating
14 governmental entities; providing an effective
15 date.

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17 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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19 Section 1. Section 380.275, Florida Statutes, is
20 created to read:

21 380.275 Beaches and coastal areas; posting of rip
22 current warning signs.--

23 (1) It is the intent of the Legislature that a
24 cooperative effort among state agencies and local governments
25 be developed to plan for and assist in the placement of rip
26 current warning signs along the public beaches and coastal
27 areas of the state. A rip current is a strong surface current
28 of water flowing out past the surf zone, which can pull even
29 the strongest swimmer into deeper water. Rip currents pose a
30 significant danger of drowning to tourists and the general

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1 public, and it is therefore important to inform the public to
2 be cautious in coastal areas where rip currents can occur.

3 (2) The department, through the Florida Coastal
4 Management Program, shall direct and coordinate the rip
5 current warning sign program, which shall be a program to
6 encourage the placement of rip current warning signs in areas
7 that may pose a significant risk to the public as a result of
8 rip currents. Signs may be located where the public has
9 established an access way to a beach or coastal area.

10 (3) The department shall develop a uniform rip current
11 warning sign for use at any public beach or along any coastal
12 area where there may be a significant threat to the public as
13 a result of rip currents, to be placed, insofar as is
14 practicable, wherever the public has established access ways
15 to the beach.

16 (4) The department is authorized, within the limits of
17 appropriations available to it for such purposes, to establish
18 and operate a program to encourage the placement of rip
19 current warning signs in areas where the public has
20 established an access way to a beach or coastal area that may
21 be subject to a significant threat of dangerous rip currents
22 and therefore may pose a hazard to the public. The department
23 shall also coordinate with the local governing body the
24 distribution and erection of rip current warning signs,
25 whenever there is a request for such assistance.

26 (5) The department may adopt rules necessary to
27 administer this section.

28 (6) The state, state agencies, local governments, and
29 local government agencies may not be held liable for any
30 injury caused by the placement or maintenance of rip current
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1 warning signs or the failure to install or maintain rip
2 current signs as provided by this section.

3 Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2002.
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