

[Home](#) / NJ Labor Department Highlights Surfboat and Lightning Safety in Advance of Summer Season

# NJ Labor Department Highlights Surfboat and Lightning Safety in Advance of Summer Season

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 23, 2023

**TRENTON** – As the unofficial start of summer approaches this Memorial Day weekend, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) is bringing attention to two [Safety Alerts](#) issued regarding surfboats and lightning exposure.

The NJDOL's Office of Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) posted the alerts to ensure public employers and employees, particularly our beach patrols, are aware of the risks involved when operating a [surfboat](#) or in a situation of increased risk of [lightning strike](#). Each alert details the possible hazards involved, as well as steps to mitigate worker injury or death.

"The Jersey Shore is a premier family-fun destination for locals and visitors alike, and our beach patrols are crucial to ensuring everyone stays safe while having a memorable visit," said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo. "NJDOL is proud to be part of our state's signature tradition by protecting these workers so they can safely perform their essential duty."

In 2022, PEOSH, which is responsible for inspecting, investigating, and educating workers and employers on workplace safety matters to ensure the safety and health of employees, performed a total of 58 [inspections of beach patrols](#) employing public employees in Monmouth, Ocean, Atlantic, and Cape May counties. Compliance officers found violations relating to boat hazard assessments, boat hazard assessment certifications, lightning policies, and record keeping. The expansive effort was prompted by the August 2021 tragic deaths of two young lifeguards, 16-year-old Norman Inferrera III, whose surfboat capsized at Cape May's Reading Avenue Beach, and 19-year-old Keith Pinto, who was struck by lightning while stationed on a lookout tower at White Sands Beach in Berkeley Township.

PEOSH compliance officers were deployed to the Cape May and Berkeley Township beaches following each incident to investigate associated safety concerns. After learning of the potential boat- and lightning-related hazards faced by beach workers, PEOSH initiated the large-scale inspection project to spread knowledge and awareness of these dangers in an effort to prevent future tragedies.

PEOSH periodically posts Health and Safety Alerts as prevalent hazards are identified. To learn more about PEOSH, and to view all Health and Safety Alerts, click [here](#).

For more information on NJDOL's Division of Public Safety and Occupational Safety and Health, and to find out how your workplace can get a free on-site health and safety consultation and training, click [here](#).

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[Home](#)

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Temporary Disability Insurance  
Family Leave Insurance  
Maternity Leave  
Unemployment Insurance  
Social Security Disability

## **Worker Protections**

Your Rights at Work  
Workers' Compensation  
Safety and Health  
Wage & Hour Compliance  
Paid Sick Leave

## **Career Support**

Career Services  
Training Provider Information

## **Employer Services**

Employer Accounts  
Employer Self-Service (NLx)  
Layoffs and Closings  
Wage & Hour Compliance  
Business Support  
Apprenticeship  
Industry Partnerships  
Employer Poster Packet

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Labor Market Information  
Center for Occupational Employment  
Information (COEI)  
Grant Opportunities  
Workforce Innovation &  
Opportunity Act (WIOA)  
Legal Notices  
Press Releases

## **About Us**

## **Statewide**

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Services A to Z  
Departments/Agencies  
Contact Us  
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Accessibility Statement

