



Fresno County Sheriff - Coroner's Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff - Coroner

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News Release

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Man Drowns While Swimming in Canal

A man who drowned in a canal running through Selma has been identified as 39 year old Jimmy Renteria of Selma.

At 8:00 pm on Thursday, dispatchers at the Fresno County Sheriff's Office received a call stating a man (Jimmy Renteria) had vanished while swimming in a canal on S. Fowler Ave., just north of E. Rose Ave. Renteria, who was swimming with friends, grabbed hold of some bars under the bridge and then let go. Once underwater, he never surfaced.

Deputies responded and drove the canal bank looking for Renteria, but were unable to see him. The Sheriff's Dive Unit would not be able to search the canal due to darkness and the dangers posed by the strong water current.

Deputies flying our EAGLE One helicopter used a spotlight to illuminate the canal, which allowed a deputy on the ground to find Renteria's floating body. Irrigation workers on scene helped secure the victim, pulling him to the side of the canal with a long pole. Dive Team members were then able to remove Renteria from the canal without entering the water.

The Sheriff's Office would like to remind the public to never swim in canals. They contain debris, hazardous objects underwater and weirs

(small dams). Exposure to these conditions can lead to serious injury or death.

The Sheriff's Office also encourages everyone to be safe in and around pools and all natural waterways. Take these simple measures.

- 1) Wear a life jacket. Make sure children have one that fits them properly.**
- 2) Stay close to shore if you are not an experienced swimmer.**
- 3) Parents should watch their children at all times.**
- 4) Do not mix alcohol and swimming. Alcohol causes swimmers to fatigue faster than normal and can create dangerous situations.**
- 5) Understand that when it's extremely hot outside you will get tired faster than usual.**
- 6) Respect the water. The temperature of the water remains cold and the current is often stronger than it appears. There can be debris in the water, which is difficult to see and may cause hazardous situations for swimmers. Be careful of the mud on the bottom of lakes and rivers, it's easy to sink in some spots and get your feet stuck.**