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## Where's Your Nearest Recompression Chamber?

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Undercurrent by Ben Davison <maildist@undercurrent.org>  
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# undercurrent

*The Independent, Nonprofit Guide for Serious Divers Since 1975*



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October 13, 2020



**A Novel Life-Saving Idea.** It's a huge challenge to save the lives of people floating in open waters without risking the responders' lives. A new flotation device may solve that problem. U SAFE, a self-propelled lifebuoy, which travels at 15 knots, can be sent to floating victims via remote control. With an inbuilt navigation and guidance system, and range of about three miles, it's been extensively tested and proven to overcome difficult waves, providing assurance that could reach the diver in danger. It's still being developed, but you can get an advance look at [here](#).

**Dan Orr Reports on Closing Recompression Chambers.** There are so few cases of divers needing therapeutic recompression these days that many U.S. chambers are no longer available 24/7 or have been shut down entirely. In fact, an injured diver may

need to be transported to a different state in an emergency. Dan Orr, the former CEO of Divers Alert Network (DAN), has been working with the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS) to address hyperbaric chamber availability and has asked *Undercurrent* to publish his important story on chamber availability. Every U.S. diver and dive operation needs to read it: [www.undercurrent.org/blog](http://www.undercurrent.org/blog).

**David Attenborough Issues a Warning.** As the United Nations convened a one-day summit last week to galvanize action to protect wildlife, David Attenborough issued a news release, stating, "Our natural world is under greater pressure now than at any time in human history, and the future of the entire planet – on which every single one of us depends – is in grave jeopardy. We still have an opportunity to reverse catastrophic biodiversity loss, but time is running out." Attenborough's new film, *A Life on Our Planet*, documents the dangers posed by climate change and species extinction. The world spends an estimated \$80-\$90 billion on conservation each year, but hundreds of billions of dollars may be needed to prevent ecosystems from collapsing. *The Shark Research Institute*

**Still Undecided about November?** If you're still an undecided voter, caught on the cusp of COVID and other issues, then as a diver, why not make the environment your deciding issue? When asked about the environment, the incumbent president says we must have clean air and clean water, which were campaign issues 50 years ago. The other candidate looks to the future by addressing global warming, how it is disrupting the seas and therefore killing reefs, destroying polar bear habitat, forcing fish and lobster into cooler waters, flooding Miami's streets, increasing the strength of hurricanes, creating droughts that kill trees and make tinder ... well it's an endless list, and 97 percent of the world's climate scientists say global warming and its concomitant problems are caused by human activity. We must take real and immediate action to reverse it, or we're all in deep trouble. On November 3rd, your vote says what you believe.

**The NTSB Report on *MV. Conception*:** Ken Kurtis of Reef Seekers Dive Co. reminds us that the NTSB will give their final report and recommendations resulting from the *Conception* fire on Tuesday, October 20. This will be a Zoom-style webinar. The good news is that while these normally start at 6:30AM PDT, since they know there will be a large West Coast viewership, they've pushed it back and will start at 10AM PDT. It likely runs three hours or so. And it will be archived, so if you can't watch the live-stream, you'll be able to view it later. There will NOT be an opportunity for viewers to comment or ask questions. But if you'd like to hear what they say, you should tune in. NTSB staff will present their finding to the NTSB Board, who will eventually vote on accepting, modifying, or rejecting those recommendations. Here's the link to the live-stream starting Oct 20, 10AM PDT: [NTSB CONCEPTION REPORT](#).

**Hurricane Delta Does Little Damage in the Yucatan.** Hurricane Delta hit just south of Cancun last week, toppling trees and cutting power to residents of the resort-studded coast. Matt Bunce of the Tank-Ha dive center in Playa del Carmen tells us damage there and in Cozumel was not as bad as first feared, with minimal structural damage and no boats lost. Cancun and the Isla Mujeres had more damage, but business should be back to normal by the time you read this email.

**Be Careful What You Write in a Review.** An American could be jailed in Thailand for posting a critical on-line review of a local resort. Yes, you read that right. Wesley Barnes, who works in Thailand, faces up to two years in jail for trashing the Sea View Resort on Koh Chang island on both Google Maps and Trip Advisor. If a company files a complaint against your postings in Thailand, under Thai defamation laws, you can get in serious trouble. Barnes was arrested by police, then released on bail. Meanwhile, businesses on tourist islands such as Phuket remain closed due to COVID restrictions and are in dire commercial straits. *TMZ*

**Don't Miss Amos Nachoum's Movie.** Amos Nachoum's semi-autobiographical movie, *Picture of His Life*, details the efforts he made to get in-water photographs of polar bears. Not only has it been accepted for the prestigious Banff Center Mountain Film Festival, but also it will show at the UN Film Festival. You can rent or buy it [here](#).

**Carnage Among Mexican Megafauna.** After 137 dead sealions were discovered earlier this year, 351 loggerhead turtles washed up along the same 75-mile coastline of northwest Mexico in September. These mass deaths are likely the result of net and line fishing off Baja California, and environmentalists are calling for the ban of such activities. Sealions migrate in packs between Canada and the south of Mexico.

**Stay Safe,**

**Ben Davison, editor/publisher**  
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### **Undercurrent May Issue**

- [St.Helena. Is it the most difficult-to-get-to diving destination?](#)
- [Tough times for members of the diving industry - How are they coping?](#)
- [Tales of woe from those who found their trips cancelled.](#)
- [Can you trust that dive guide?](#)
- [Afloat and lost at the surface of the ocean - and how to avoid it.](#)
- [Bad Covid-19 News for divers? Experts don't agree.](#)
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