



Fresno County Sheriff's Office

John Zanoni, Sheriff

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News Release

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Man With No Swimming Skills Drowns in San Joaquin River

On Monday, 24 year old James Romero Soriano of Mendota drowned in the San Joaquin River.

Around 5:30 pm on Monday, a small group of friends were hanging out at the San Joaquin River, near San Mateo Ave. in Mendota. James Romero Soriano, who did not know how to swim, chose to enter the water. The current of the river quickly carried him away and he went underwater. His friends called 911 as they continued to try and find him. After approximately 15 minutes of searching, they found him and pulled him to shore.

Deputies, Cal Fire firefighters and EMS personnel arrived and began giving him CPR. A SkyLife helicopter landed and transported Soriano to Community Regional Medical Center, where he later passed away.

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

- 1) Wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket. Make sure it is secure and fits the person properly.**
- 2) Stay out of the water 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 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.**
- 7) 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. Also, use your feet to feel for drop off spots. River and lake bottoms can dramatically change from shallow to deep in a short distance.**