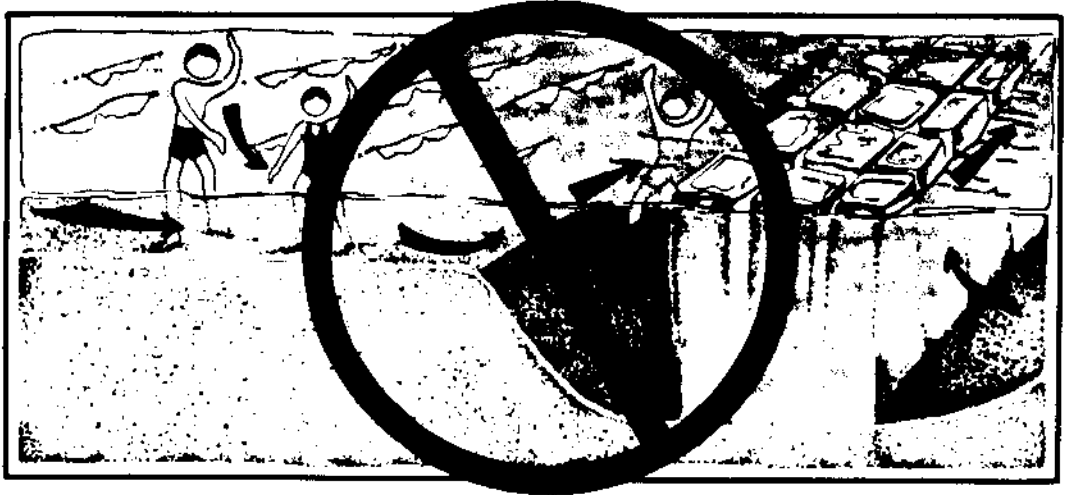


CIRCULATING COPY

Texas Rips!



Rip currents, the strong seaward flow of water along the bottom near shore, are often a danger in the Gulf of Mexico, particularly around such man-made objects as rock groins, jetties and piers. If many waves break one after another, the water collects on the beach faster than it can flow out. Eventually so much water collects that it flows out in a fast, narrow current—the rip current—that cuts a channel in the bottom. This current can sweep you into deep water fast! It also cuts deep holes in seemingly shallow water near man-made structures. Stay away—at least 100 feet. These areas are dangerous!

A way out...



If you get caught in a rip current, do not try to swim straight for shore. The strong current can make even the best swimmer tired—and tired is dangerous. A rip current is narrow and dies out beyond the breakers. If it is weak, swim parallel to the shore until you're out of the current, then swim ashore. If the current is stronger, float with it until it dies out, then swim toward the shore.