



CLEARWATER MARINE
AQUARIUM™

***CMA Releasing Green Sea Turtle, “Chex” Who Swallowed a Balloon
Public Cautioned about the Dangers of Releasing Balloons to Marine Life***

PRESS RELEASE

Clearwater, FL (May 24, 2017) – “Chex,” a recently rescued juvenile green sea turtle, was found floating off Redington Pier and struggling to dive. Soon after he was brought to Clearwater Marine Aquarium for rehabilitation, it was discovered that he had ingested a balloon with string attached. The entire balloon eventually passed through his gastrointestinal tract, at CMA.

Clearwater Marine Aquarium has been providing care for Chex the green sea turtle, an endangered species, since his rescue on March 20, 2017.

After two months of rehabilitation, Chex has been cleared by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Clearwater Marine Aquarium to be released back into the wild.

Clearwater Marine Aquarium reminds individuals the dangers that balloons and plastics pose to marine life. Marine animals can become entangled or accidentally ingest these items while feeding. Once ingested, the plastic items can cause a variety of issues. Digestive tracts can become blocked, which can lead to starvation and death.

“Remember that even when far from the sea, balloons and other plastic trash may end up harming marine life and affecting entire food chains that come back to impact our own lives,” says Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

To learn more about the impact balloons/trash have on sea turtles visit <https://t.co/TXbpAKb5Pq>.

Chex, can be viewed until his release at <https://seewinter.com> on the “Chex Cam” or by visiting Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

Essential Media Information:

- CMA marine biologist will be available from 1-3 p.m. on Thursday, May 25 for interviews following the release
 - Clearwater Marine Aquarium 249 Windward Passage, Clearwater, FL
- Release date: Thursday, May 25
- Release will be at a private location
- Pre-release and release footage will be provided to the media as needed
- Photos of Chex will be available, as needed
- CMA will live broadcast the release on Facebook – Clearwater Marine Aquarium

For further information, contact Julia Anderson at janderson@cmaquarium.org or 727.686.3499.

About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release. CMA is home to rescued dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter the dolphin's story of survival, after an injury that caused her to lose her tail, has impacted millions of people around the world. A major motion picture, *Dolphin Tale*, highlighted her life story in 2011. The sequel, *Dolphin Tale 2*, was released in September 2014 and features the incredible story of Hope, a young resident dolphin of CMA. The mission and potential to change people's lives differentiates Clearwater Marine Aquarium from any other aquarium in the world.

WE BELIEVE in preserving our environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of marine life, environmental education, research and conservation.

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