



Summary of Incident in Shark Exhibit May 15, 2017

At approximately 9:30 this morning at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, two people -- a zoo Dive Safety Officer and zoo trained volunteer diver -- were doing routine maintenance in the shark exhibit.

One of the zoo's three sandbar sharks bit the volunteer diver's finger.

Staff delivered first aid and called 911 based on zoo emergency procedures. The diver was alert and conscious. Paramedics arrived minutes later and transported the diver to Tacoma General Hospital.

According to the Dive Safety Officer in the water, the 4-foot long sandbar shark was behaving normally before the encounter and all dive safety protocols were followed.

The zoo's Diving Control Board, composed of nationally certified dive safety officers and instructors, is conducting a thorough review of the incident. Pending this review, all open water dives in the exhibit have been cancelled.

Divers have been conducting routine maintenance in the shark exhibit since it opened in 1989 and there has never before been a shark bite.