



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Fire Department

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DATE: 09/06/2010
NATURE OF INCIDENT: Water Emergency
CASE NO.: 10006033
INCIDENT DATE :09/06/2010
INCIDENT TIME: 11:30 AM
INCIDENT LOCATION: 8731 Congdon Boulevard
SUBJECT: Kayak Water Rescue
BY: Assistant Chief Richard Mattson

Duluth Fire Department Responds to Water Emergency in Lake Superior

Duluth, MN. 9/6/10. Duluth Fire Department responded today to a water emergency in Lake Superior across from 8731 Congdon Blvd. At 11:30 a.m. on Monday, Sept 6, firefighters from Number 6 Fire Engine in Lakeside arrived first on the scene of someone out in Lake Superior in rough waters.

“We found a kayaker in the water. He was separated from his boat and was about a half block from shore,” reported Duluth Fire Captain Mark Herman. Captain Herman immediately entered Lake Superior wearing his dry rescue suit, fins and water response gear. Duluth Fire Equipment Operator Trevor Olsen stayed on shore to communicate with other responders who were on their way to the scene. Captain Herman swam to the 43 year old kayaker and assisted him in getting to shore. He was too tired to swim to shore on his own but was uninjured.

The kayaker told rescuers that he started paddling his kayak from the McQuade Safe Harbor and was paddling toward Duluth, but realized the water and waves were too rough. While turning around, he was hit by a large wave and his boat turned over. He was unable to roll back over in the rough waters so he bailed out of his kayak. He was able to signal someone on shore who then called 911. The kayaker, who is a Duluth resident, was wearing a wet suit, life jacket and had his paddle. he stated that the life jacket did not keep him floating high enough to keep him completely above the waves coming off the lake. He was able to drive home on his own following a ride to his car by a Duluth Police Officer.

Duluth Fire Department also had four additional fire apparatus responding with a rescue boat and additional water rescue equipment. Other agencies responding included the U.S. Coast Guard, St. Louis County Rescue Squad, Gold Cross Ambulance, Duluth Police, and St. Louis County Sheriff’s Department.