

# Search for teen who jumped into Walnut River near Augusta called off



(KWCH)  
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Thursday, May 14, 2020

The search for a 19-year-old man who jumped off a dam into the Walnut River south of Augusta on the night of May 6 has been called off due to weather and recent rain.

Butler County Sheriff Kelly Herzet says he hopes to get crews back down to the site in a couple weeks once it's safe for the recovery effort to continue.

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Thursday, May 7, 2020

Recovery efforts for a teenager who jumped off a dam into the Walnut River south of Augusta Wednesday night have been called off due to severe weather.

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Thursday afternoon, Butler County Sheriff Kelly Herzet called the incident another tragedy that has happened near the dam. He said the area is a hot-spot for kids to come and hang out even though they are trespassing on the land.

Herzet said the 19-year-old was with three friends down by the dam when he took off his shirt and put his cell phone on the ground. The teen then walked out into the middle of the dam and asked his friends to jump in with him. The didn't, but he did, and he hasn't been seen since.

"He did take off his shirt, put a cell phone down and go out on the dam, according to their interviews, and jump in the water," said Herzet. "Why they didn't get on the phone right then and call 911 to report that he didn't come up? I don't know that; they were scared? Afraid they're gonna be in trouble, trespassing?"

The sheriff said the teens left the scene and went back into town to pick up girlfriend, then came back to the river. He said the property owner found the 19-year-old's shirt and cell phone and called police suspecting trespassing.

Herzet said the teen's friends didn't mention he was missing until the girl with them told deputies the 19-year-old had not been seen since jumping into the water.

Crews will continue to run the side sonar along the river until water levels go down. Another boat was also launched Thursday to assist with the search.

Herzet said due to the water flow, the Walnut River can be very dangerous for people who go near it.

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Wednesday, May 6, 2020

The Butler County Sheriff's Office confirmed Wednesday night a search is underway following a report of a 19-year-old falling into the Walnut River near Augusta.

The sheriff's office said the man was with at least two other people walking along the river when he decided to go for a swim. He took off his shirt, put his cellphone on the bank and jumped into the water near the Osage Street dam, according to the sheriff's office.

A landowner discovered the belongings and called 911 around 7:30 p.m. believing someone to be trespassing.

Law enforcement arrived and located two males and a female in the area. The group was given a trespass warning and allowed to leave, but the female was hesitant and lingered. She told officers that the males told her about the 19-year-old jumping into the water and not coming back up.

Search crews were then dispatched to the area and a boat was put into the water. It will be used until it's determined to be unsafe due to high water levels.

The sheriff's office said this remains a rescue effort at this time. Crews remained on the scene overnight Wednesday into Thursday morning.

Family members have been notified, but the man's identity was not released.

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