

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA's BEACH Report: Maine 2010 Swimming Season

May 2011

Introduction

The BEACH Act of 2000 requires that coastal and Great Lakes states and territories report to EPA on beach monitoring and notification data for their coastal recreation waters. The BEACH Act defines coastal recreation waters as the Great Lakes and coastal waters (including coastal estuaries) that states, territories, and authorized tribes officially recognize or designate for swimming, bathing, surfing, or similar activities in the water.

This fact sheet summarizes beach monitoring and notification data submitted to EPA by the State of Maine for the 2010 swimming season.

The Maine Healthy Beaches (MHB) Program is committed to implementing an adaptive monitoring regime, routinely assessing the risk of pollution at each beach management area and improving public notification of water quality conditions on Maine's coastal beaches. It is a unique partnership among municipalities, state parks, the University of Maine Cooperative Extension/Sea Grant, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, nonprofit organizations, other state agencies and volunteers.

Figure 1. Maine coastal counties.

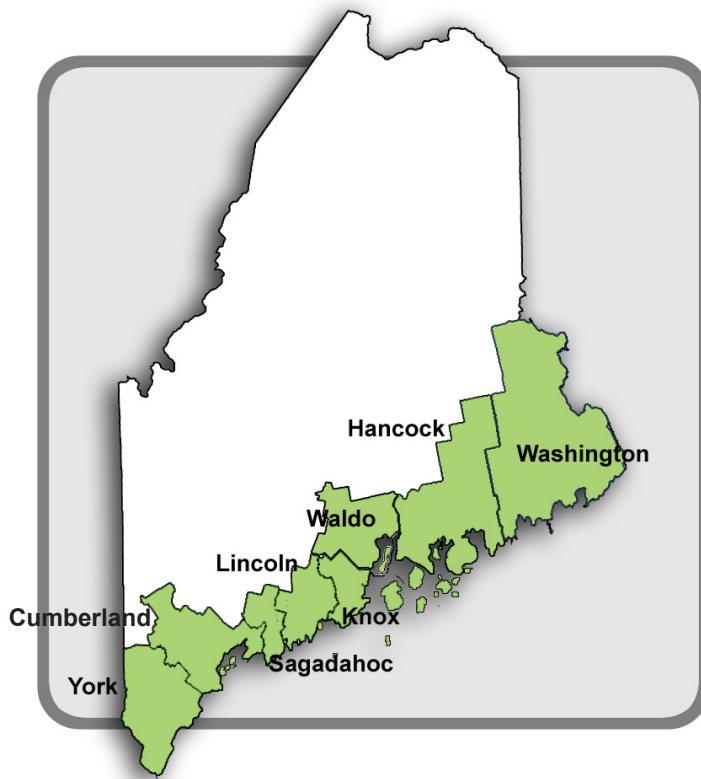


Table 1. Breakdown of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2010.¹

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
CUMBERLAND	9	9	0
HANCOCK	5	5	0
KNOX	3	3	0
LINCOLN	1	1	0
SAGADAHOC	6	6	0
WALDO	1	1	0
YORK	34	34	0
TOTALS	59	59	0

¹ Contact the Maine Healthy Beaches Program for a list of participating beaches



2010 Summary Results

How many notification actions were reported and how long were they?

When water quality standards are exceeded at a particular beach, Maine issues a beach advisory that warns people to avoid contact with the ocean water. A total of 29 monitored beaches had at least one advisory issued during the 2010 swimming season. About 69 percent of Maine's 71 notification actions lasted two days or less. Figure 2 presents a full breakdown of notification action durations.

What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?

For Maine's 2010 swimming season, actions were reported about 4 percent of the time (Figure 3).

How do 2010 results compare to previous years?

Table 2 compares 2010 notification action data with monitored beach data from previous years.

What pollution sources possibly impact investigated monitored beaches?

Maine reports that the MHB Program is actively working toward identification and remediation of pollution sources with the affected communities through special studies and sanitary surveys. The nonpoint sources of pollution affecting Maine's coastal beaches have not been quantified.

For More Information

For general information about beaches:
www.epa.gov/beaches/

For information about beaches in Maine:
www.MaineHealthyBeaches.org

Figure 2: Beach notification actions by duration.

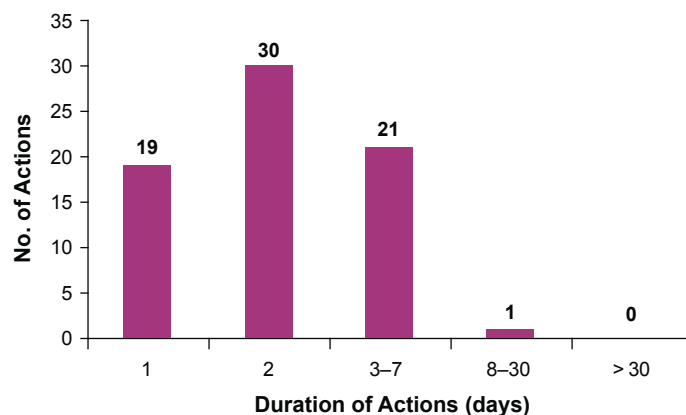


Figure 3: Beach days with and without notification actions.

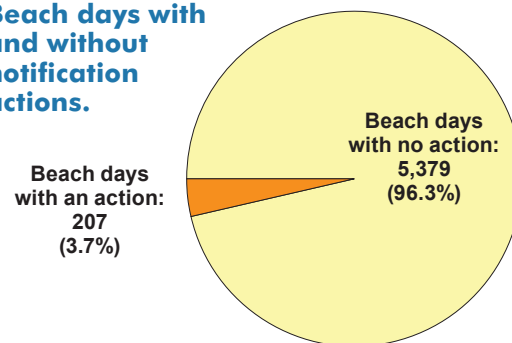


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2008–2010.

	2008	2009	2010
Number of monitored beaches	60	60	59
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	22	36	29
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	37%	60%	49%
Percentage of beach days affected by notification actions	3%	4%	4%