

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA's BEACH Report: New Hampshire 2010 Swimming Season

May 2011

Introduction

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 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 New Hampshire for the 2010 swimming season.

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) began monitoring coastal beaches in 1989 and the program continues to provide weekly summer monitoring. From June 1 through September 1, 2010, 322 beach inspections were conducted and 1284 samples were analyzed for enterococci. Six beach advisories were posted in 2010, a decrease of one from seven advisories in 2009.

In addition to the standard sampling, DES continues into the second phase of its bacteria source identification project both to determine bacteria sources affecting public beaches and to develop watershed plans for two of the nine coastal watersheds. A final report for the first phase of the project was completed in late summer 2009 and is available on the DES website, <http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/beaches/index.htm>. The second phase will be completed by June 2011 with a final report to follow also on the program website.

The local chapter of Surfrider Foundation, a non-profit ocean environmental organization, continues to work with the DES Beach Program by volunteering to monitor coastal beaches in the off-season. From March to April, Surfrider volunteers conducted 15 inspections, submitting 25 samples to be analyzed for enterococci. No advisories were prompted by the 2010 off-season sampling.

The DES Beach Program continued the cooperative effort with the Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation (Blue Ocean), begun in April 2005, to clean up coastal beaches. Blue Ocean organizes volunteer groups to conduct monthly beach clean-ups. The DES Beach Program provides each group of volunteers with garbage bags, gloves, scales and other necessary supplies, as requested, at 14 of the 16 coastal beaches. In addition to collecting the trash, volunteers tally the weight and number of trash items collected. In 2010, 8,338 pounds of trash were collected. As in past years, cigarette butts were the most common litter accounting for 29,868 of the items collected. Volunteers spent approximately 3,700 hours participating in these clean-up efforts. The DES Beach Program looks forward to many years of this partnership.

Figure 1. New Hampshire coastal county.

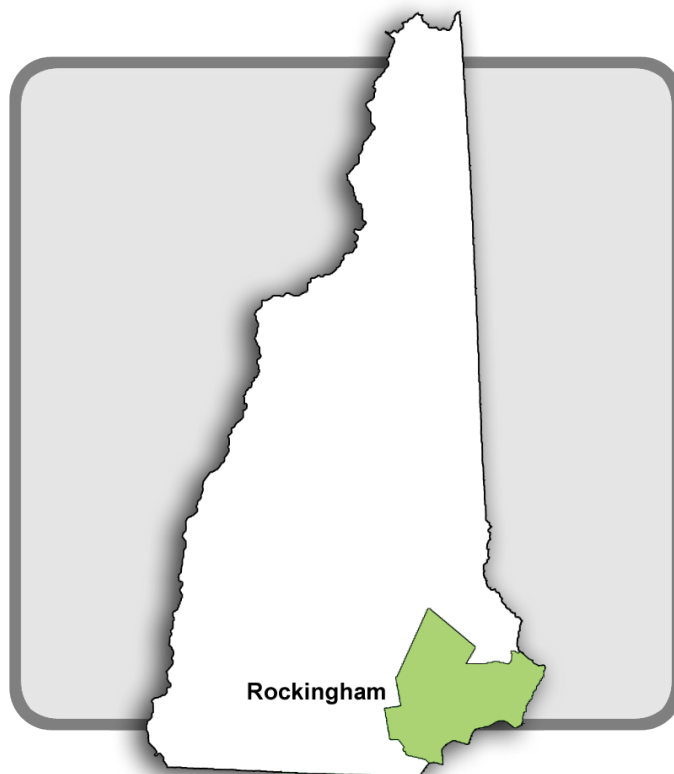


Table 1. Breakdown of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2010.

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
ROCKINGHAM	16	16	0
TOTALS	16	16	0

2010 Summary Results

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

When water quality standards are exceeded at a particular beach, New Hampshire issues a beach advisory that warns people to avoid contact with the water. Five monitored beaches had advisories issued during the 2010 swimming season. Figure 2 presents a breakdown of notification action durations.

What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?

For New Hampshire's 2010 swimming season, actions were reported one 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 affect investigated monitored beaches?

Figure 4 displays the percentage of New Hampshire's investigated monitored beaches possibly affected by various pollution sources. In 2010, 50 percent of the beaches had no sources of pollution.

For More Information

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

For information about beaches in New Hampshire:
<http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/beaches/index.htm>

Figure 2: Beach notification actions by duration.

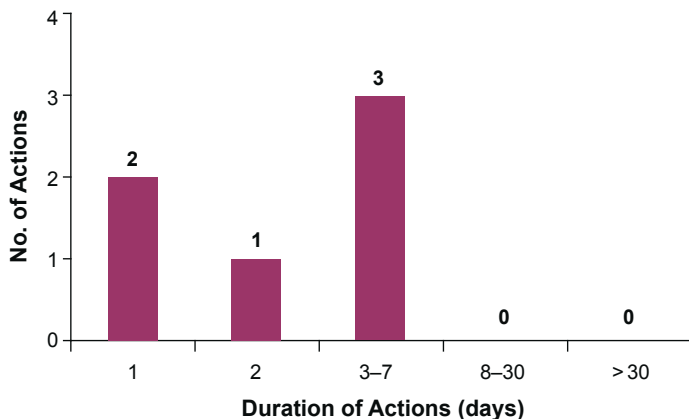


Figure 3. Beach days with and without notification actions.

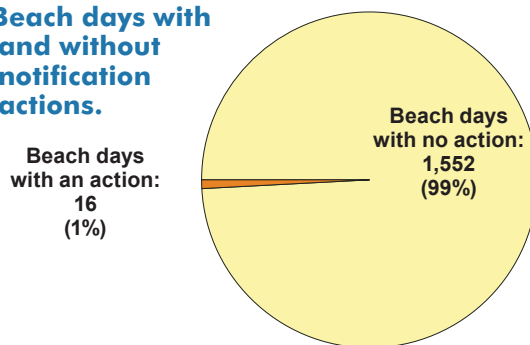


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2008–2010.

	2008	2009	2010
Number of monitored beaches	16	17	16
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	4	5	5
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	25%	29%	31%
Percentage of beach days affected by notification actions	< 1%	< 1%	1%

Figure 4: Percent of investigated monitored beaches affected by possible pollution sources (16 beaches).

