

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA's BEACH Report: Virginia 2008 Swimming Season

July 2009

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 Commonwealth of Virginia for the 2008 swimming season.

Figure 1. Virginia coastal counties.

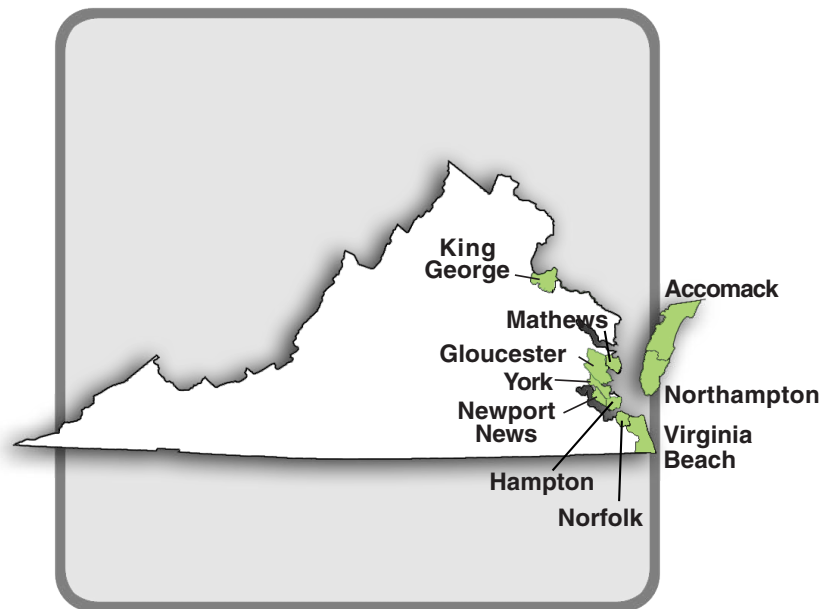


Table 1. Breakdown of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2008.

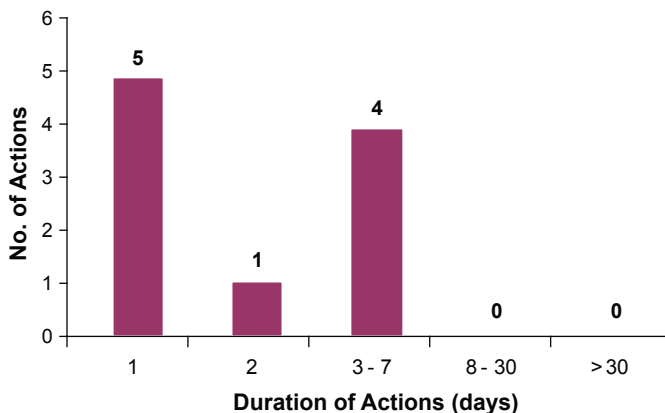
County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
ACCOMACK	2	1	1
GLOUCESTER	1	1	0
HAMPTON	2	2	0
KING GEORGE	1	1	0
MATHEWS	1	1	0
NEWPORT NEWS	4	4	0
NORFOLK	9	9	0
NORTHAMPTON	2	2	0
VIRGINIA BEACH	24	22	2
YORK	1	1	0
TOTALS	47	44	3

2008 Summary Results

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

When water quality standards are exceeded at a particular beach, Virginia's approach is to issue a beach advisory that warns people to avoid contact with the ocean water. A total of 6 monitored beaches had at least one advisory issued during the 2008 swimming season. Sixty percent of Virginia's notification actions lasted two days or less. Figure 2 presents a full breakdown of notification action durations.

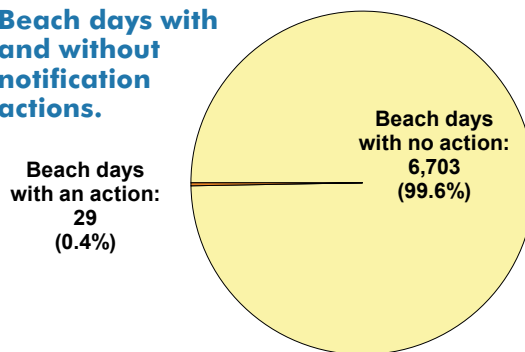
Figure 2: Beach notification actions by duration.



What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?

For Virginia's 2008 swimming season, actions were reported less than 1 percent of the time (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Beach days with and without notification actions.



How do 2008 results compare to previous years?

Table 2 compares 2008 notification action data with monitored beach data from previous years.

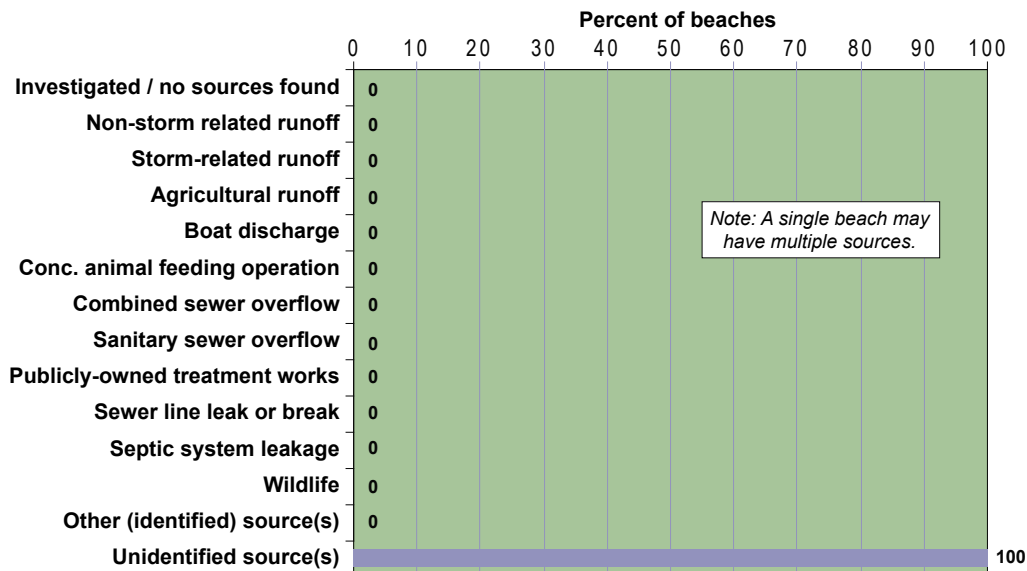
Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2006-2008.

	2006	2007	2008
Number of monitored beaches	47	47	44
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	4	8	6
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	9%	17%	14%
Percentage of beach days affected by notification actions	1%	1%	<1%

What pollution sources possibly affect investigated monitored beaches?

Possible sources of pollution affecting Virginia's investigated monitored beaches were not identified in 2008 (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percent of investigated monitored beaches affected by possible pollution sources (44 beaches).



For More Information

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

For information about beaches in Virginia:
www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DEE/BeachMonitoring/