

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA's BEACH Report:

Alabama 2006 Swimming Season

June 2007

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 Alabama for the 2006 swimming season.

Figure 1. Alabama coastal counties with 2006 monitored beach data.

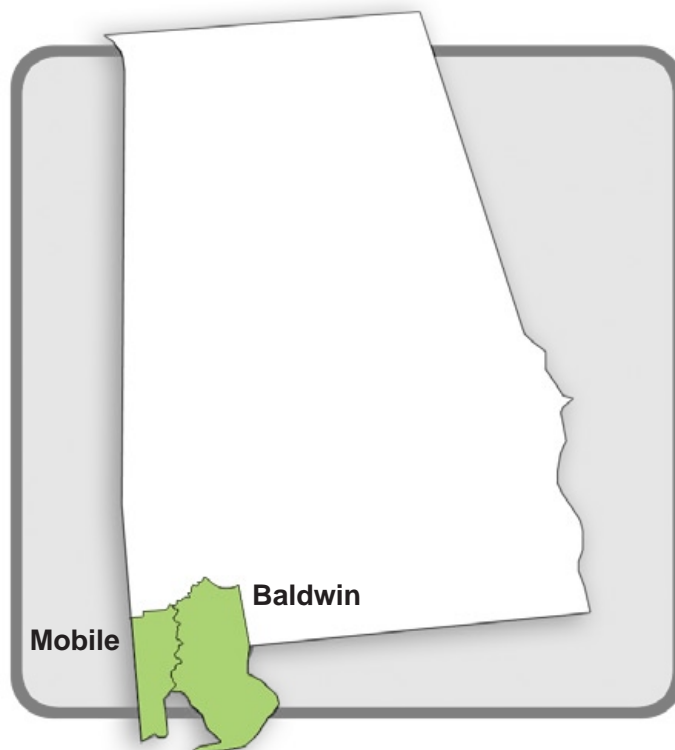


Table 1. Breakdown of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county.

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
BALDWIN	23	23	0
MOBILE	4	4	0
TOTALS	27	27	0

2006 Summary Results

How many beaches had notification actions?

When monitoring of water at beaches shows that levels of certain bacteria exceed standards, Alabama's beach managers post a beach advisory, warning people of the possible risks of swimming, or formally notify the public that the beach is closed. Of the 27 coastal beaches that were monitored in 2006, 5, or 19 percent, had at least one advisory during the 2006 season (Figure 2).

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

A total of 11 beach notification actions were reported in the 2006 swimming season. Actions were of relatively short duration, however. Figure 3 presents breakdowns of action durations.

What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?

For Alabama's 2006 swimming season, EPA determined there were a total of 4,131 beach days associated with the 27 monitored beaches. Actions were reported on 26 of those days or about 1 percent of the time (Figure 4).

How do 2006 results compare to previous years?

Beginning in 2003, states are required to submit data to EPA under the BEACH Act for beaches which are in coastal and Great Lakes waters. Table 2 compares 2006 data with data reported in previous years.

For More Information

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

For information about beaches in Alabama:
www.adem.state.al.us/FieldOps/Monitoring/BeachMonitoring.htm

Figure 2: Monitored beaches with and without notification actions.

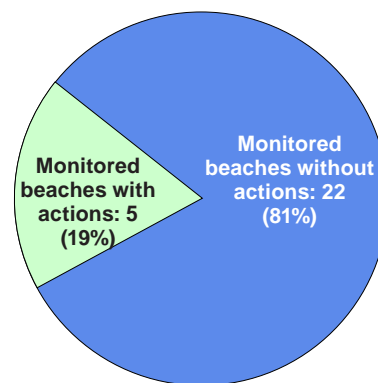


Figure 3: Beach notification actions by duration.

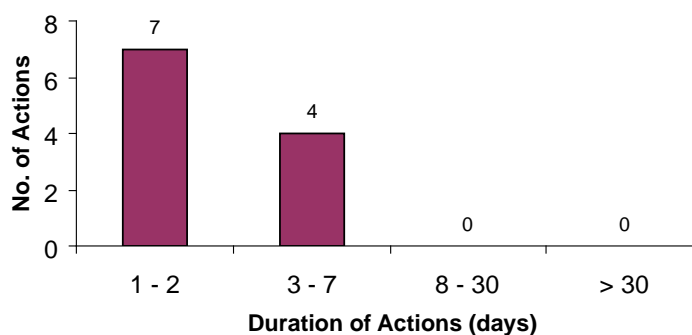


Figure 4: Beach days with and without notification actions.

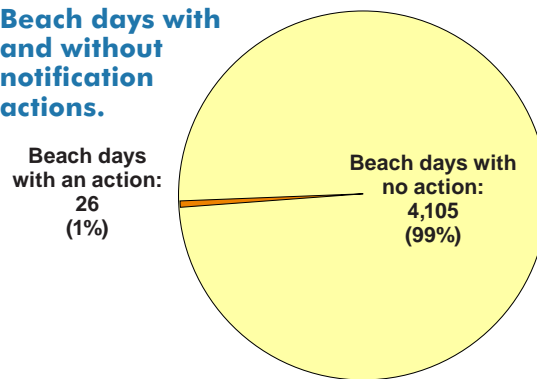


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2004-2006.

	2004	2005	2006
Number of monitored beaches	25	25	27
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	10	0	5
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	40%	0%	18%