

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA's BEACH Report:

Connecticut 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 Connecticut for the 2006 swimming season.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health collects monitored beach data for 67 marine beaches located along its shoreline with Long Island Sound. Local health departments monitor sixty-three (63) of these beaches. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection monitors the remaining four (4) State Park marine beaches.

Connecticut has adopted a set of beach monitoring guidelines that are based on US EPA standards for recreational bathing waters. These guidelines have been in effect since May 1989. They were revised most recently on April 2003.

Questions about a municipal beach should be directed to the shoreline local health department that monitors it. Questions about a State Park beach should be directed to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

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



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

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
FAIRFIELD	28	28	0
MIDDLESEX	6	6	0
NEW HAVEN	19	19	0
NEW LONDON	14	14	0
TOTALS	67	67	0

2006 Summary Results

How many beaches had notification actions?

Connecticut beach managers will post a warning advisory or closure sign at a beach when conditions are unsafe or when levels of certain bacteria exceed standards. Of the 67 coastal beaches that were monitored 40, or 60 percent, had at least one beach action (advisory or closure) during the 2006 swimming season (Figure 2).

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

A total of 107 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 Connecticut's 2006 swimming season, EPA determined there were a total of 6,901 beach days associated with the 67 monitored beaches. Actions were reported on 224 of those days or about 3 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 Connecticut:
www.dph.state.ct.us/BRS/Recreation/Beaches.htm

Figure 2: Monitored beaches with and without notification actions.

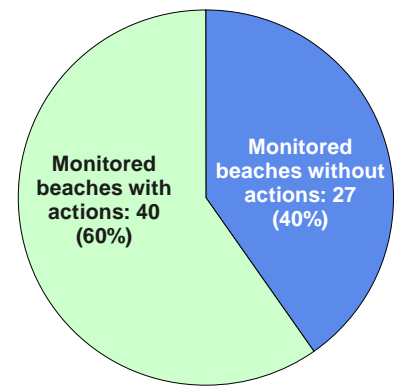


Figure 3: Beach notification actions by duration.

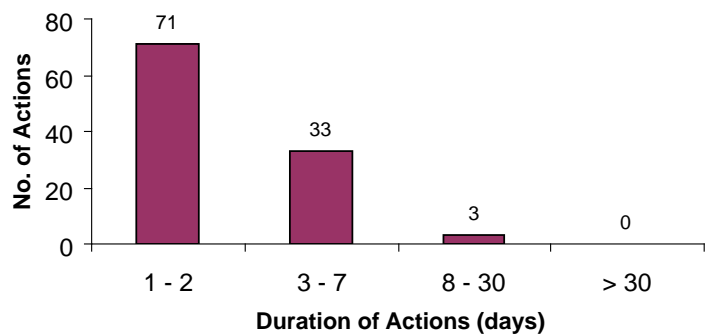


Figure 4: Beach days with and without notification actions.

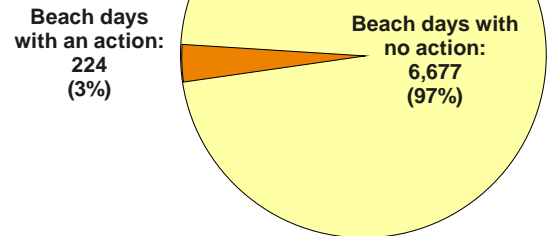


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2004-2006.

	2004	2005	2006
Number of monitored beaches	65	67	67
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	30	28	40
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	46%	42%	60%