

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA's BEACH Report: Hawaii 2009 Swimming Season

May 2010

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 Hawaii for the 2009 swimming season.

Under the BEACH Act, almost all of Hawaii's coastal waters are considered "beaches." A beach can be a cliff, rocky shoreline, or a sandy stretch of coastline. As long as the water along the coastline is used for full contact water recreation, it is considered a beach.

Hawaii's monitoring program focuses on intensity of use, as the guide in the selection of beaches to be monitored and the frequency of sampling. In 2009, 245 beaches were monitored.

Figure 1. Hawaii coastal counties.

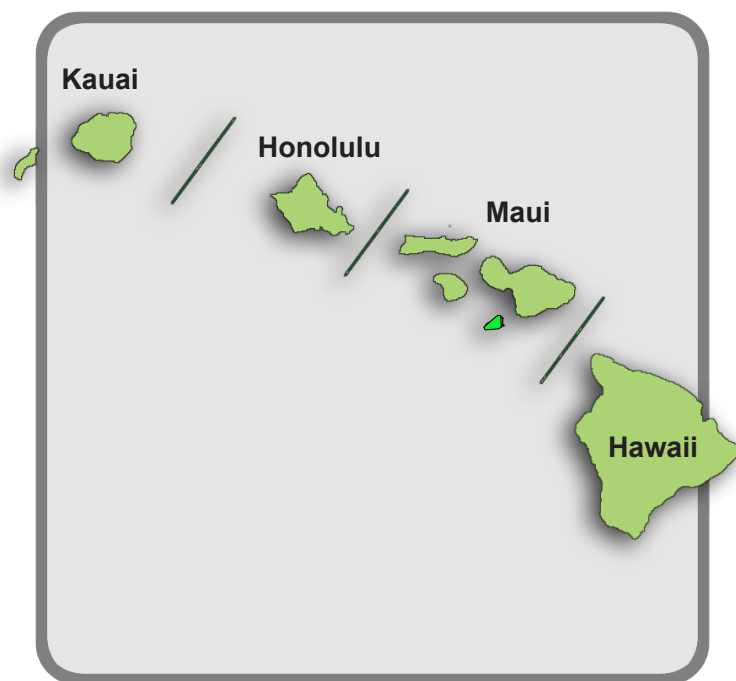


Table 1. Monitored coastal beaches by island for 2009.

County	Monitored
HAWAII	50
HONOLULU	126
KAUAI	16
MAUI	53
TOTALS	245

2009 Summary Results

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

When water quality standards are exceeded at a particular beach, Hawaii's approach is to issue a beach advisory that warns people to avoid contact with the ocean water. In 2009 every beach had a one-day pre-emptive rain advisory issued on October 6. Figure 2 presents a full breakdown of notification action durations.

What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?

For Hawaii's 2009 swimming season, actions were reported about 1 percent of the time (Figure 3).

How do 2009 results compare to previous years?

Table 2 compares 2009 notification action data with monitored beach data from previous years. Unlike in previous years, in 2009 EPA included rain advisories as actions. This change in reporting accounts for the large increases in the number of beaches affected by notification actions and the percentage of beaches affected by notification actions.

What pollution sources possibly affect investigated monitored beaches?

Figure 4 displays the percentage of Hawaii's monitored beaches possibly affected by various pollution sources. In 2009, 100 percent of the beaches included storm-related runoff as a known potential source.

For More Information

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

For information about beaches in Hawaii:
www.hawaii.gov/health/environmental/water/cleanwater/index.html

Figure 2: Beach notification actions by duration.

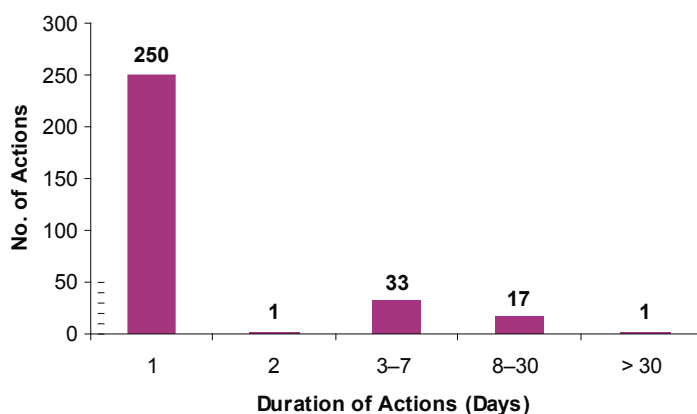


Figure 3: Beach days with and without notification actions.

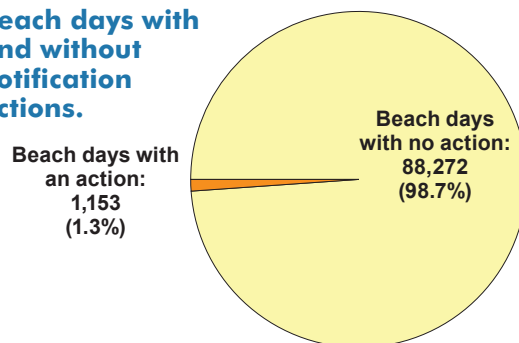


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2007-2009.

	2007	2008	2009
Number of monitored beaches	115	248	245
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	8	7	245
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	7%	3%	100%
Percentage of beach days affected by notification actions	<1%	<1%	1%

Figure 4: Percent of investigated monitored beaches affected by possible pollution sources (245 beaches).

