



EPA's BEACH Report: Hawaii 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 State of Hawaii for the 2008 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. Hawaii's 444 beaches represent about 297 miles of coastline, of which 91 miles are monitored. On Oahu, where most of the State's population resides, 144 beaches represents about 125 miles of coastline, of which 55 miles are monitored.

Figure 1. Hawaii coastal counties.

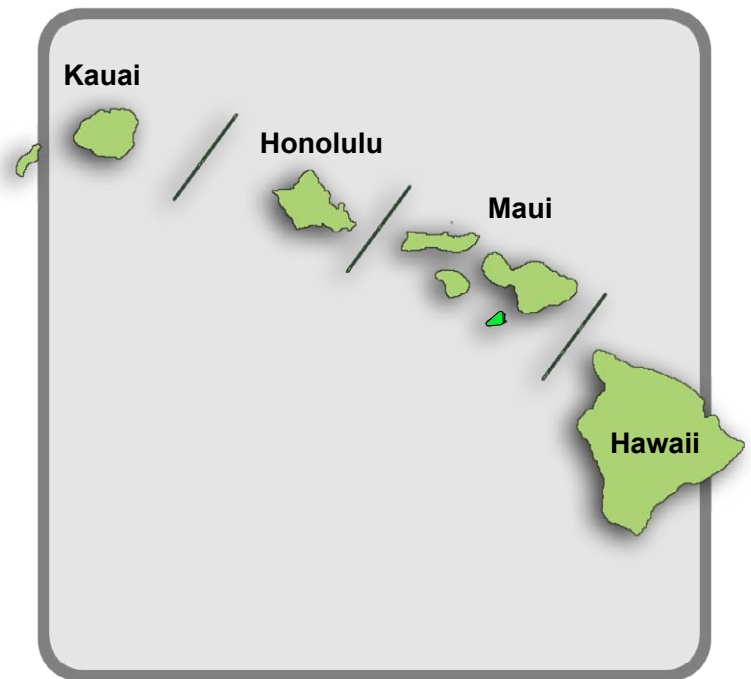


Table 1. Breakdown of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2008.

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
HAWAII	104	35	69
HONOLULU	144	133	11
KAUAI	73	37	36
MAUI	123	43	80
TOTALS	444	248	196

2008 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. A total of 7 beaches had at least one advisory issued during the 2008 swimming season. Figure 2 presents a full breakdown of notification action durations.

What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?

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

How do 2008 results compare to previous years?

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

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 2008, 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.

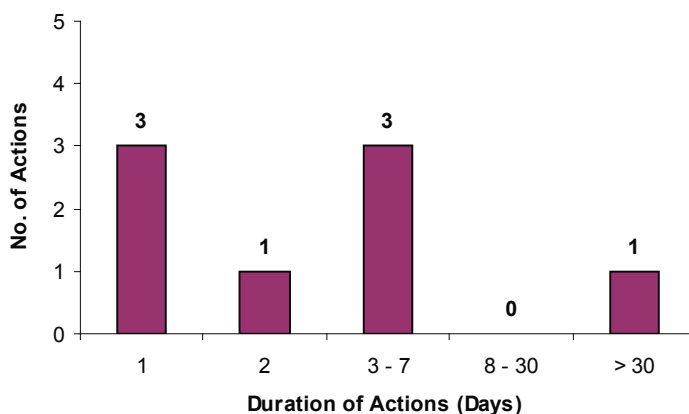


Figure 3: Beach days with and without notification actions.

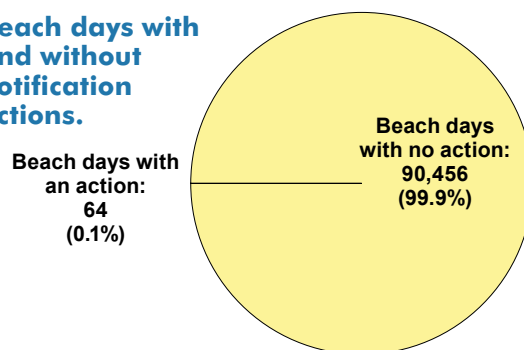


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2006–2008.

	2006	2007	2008
Number of monitored beaches	112	115	248
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	16	8	7
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	14%	7%	3%
Percentage of beach days affected by notification actions	1%	<1%	<1%

Figure 4: Percent of investigated monitored beaches affected by possible pollution sources (248 beaches).

