



EPA's BEACH Report:

Massachusetts 2007 Swimming Season

July 2008

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 Massachusetts for the 2007 swimming season.

Figure 1. Massachusetts coastal counties.

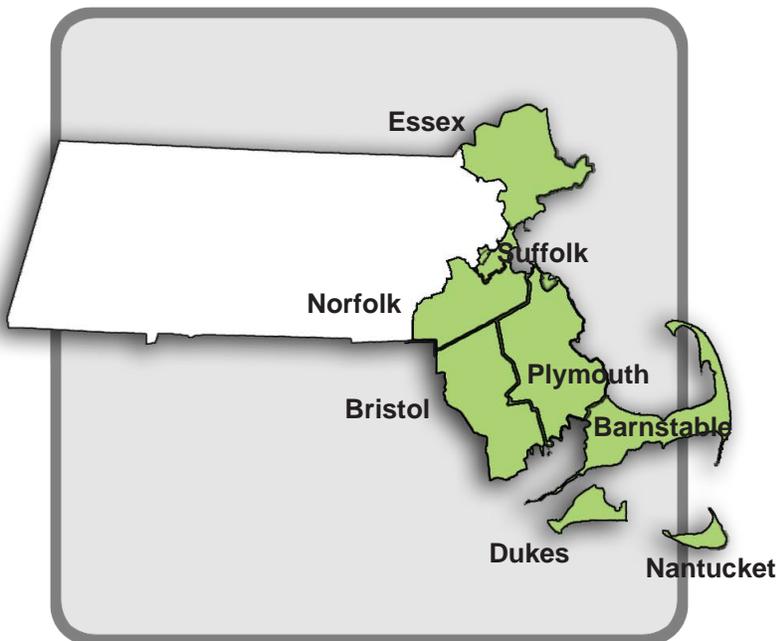


Table 1. Breakdown of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2007.

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
BARNSTABLE	269	269	0
BRISTOL	30	30	0
DUKES	45	45	0
ESSEX	98	98	0
NANTUCKET	17	17	0
NORFOLK	26	26	0
PLYMOUTH	97	97	0
SUFFOLK	14	14	0
TOTALS	596	596	0

2007 Summary Results

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

Massachusetts' approach is to issue a beach advisory when water quality standards are exceeded at a particular beach that warns people to avoid contact with the ocean water. A total of 134 monitored beaches had at least one advisory issued during the 2007 swimming season. About 76 percent of Massachusetts' 227 notification actions lasted two days or less. Figure 2 presents a full breakdown of notification action durations.

What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?

For Massachusetts' 2007 swimming season, actions were reported about 1 percent of the time (Figure 3).

How do 2007 results compare to previous years?

Table 2 compares 2007 notification action data with monitored beach data from previous years.

What pollution sources impact monitored beaches?

Figure 4 displays the percentage of Massachusetts' monitored beaches potentially impacted by various pollution sources. In 2007, 81 percent of the beaches have not been investigated for pollution sources. Storm-related runoff was identified as a source for 18 percent of the beaches.

For More Information

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

For information about beaches in Massachusetts:
www.mass.gov/dph/beaches
or (617) 624-5757

Figure 2: Beach notification actions by duration.

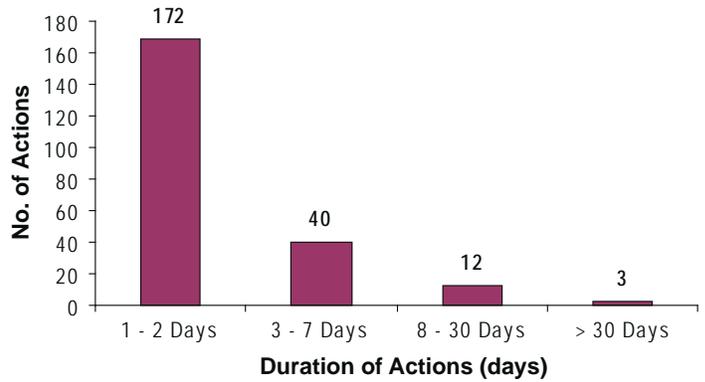


Figure 3: Beach days with and without notification actions.

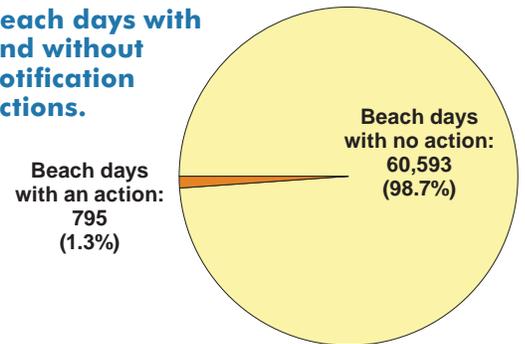


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2005–2007.

	2005	2006	2007
Number of monitored beaches	780	621	596
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	134	154	134
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	17%	25%	22%
Percentage of beach days affected by notification actions	1%	2%	1%

Figure 4: Percent of monitored beaches potentially impacted by pollution sources (596 beaches).

