



EPA's BEACH Report:

New Hampshire 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 State of New Hampshire for the 2007 swimming season.

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) began monitoring coastal beaches 1989 and the program continues to provide weekly summer monitoring. From May 29th through Labor Day of 2007, 309 beach inspections were conducted and 1,147 samples were collected and analyzed for Enterococci. Only one beach advisory was posted in 2007, a decrease from six in 2006. New Castle Town Beach, New Castle, was posted for two days in July.

In addition, a study was conducted to determine bacteria levels in beach sand and groundwater and their affects on beach water quality. Preliminary data from the New Hampshire study show little or no contamination of the sand or underlying groundwater at the four beaches studied: Seabrook Town Beach, Sun Valley Beach, State Beach, and Sawyer Beach. A final report will be available soon.

New Hampshire seacoast surfers formed a local chapter of the Surfrider Foundation and contacted DES to offer their services as volunteer monitors. During the off-season, volunteers conducted 34 inspections at North Beach and Jenness Beach, collecting 149 samples to be analyzed for Enterococci. The program is continuing in 2008.

DES continued the cooperative effort with the Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation (Blue Ocean), begun in April 2005, to clean-up Hampton Beach State Park. Blue Ocean organizes volunteer groups for each section to conduct monthly beach clean-ups. DES provides the volunteers with garbage bags, gloves, scales, and other supplies. Volunteers tally the weight and number of trash items collected. In 2007, 1,950 pounds of trash were collected. Cigarette butts were the most numerous item with 37,661 collected. Volunteers spent a total of 104 hours participating in these clean-up efforts. The Beach Program hopes this program will continue for many years to come.

Figure 1. New Hampshire coastal county.

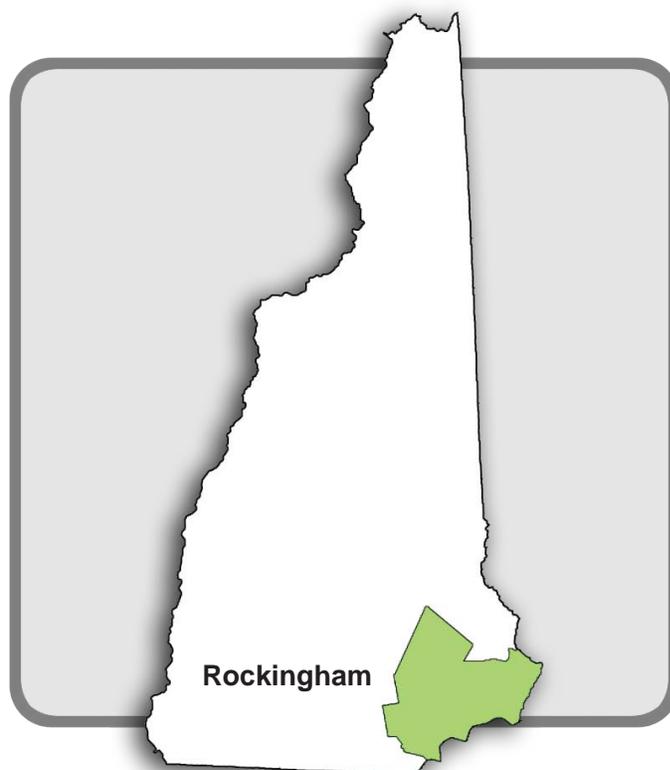


Table 1. Breakdown of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2007.

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
ROCKINGHAM	16	16	0
TOTALS	16	16	0

2007 Summary Results

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

New Hampshire’s 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 water. One monitored beach had one 2-day advisory issued during the 2007 swimming season. Figure 2 presents a full breakdown of notification action durations.

What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?

For New Hampshire’s 2007 swimming season, actions were reported less than one 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 New Hampshire’s monitored beaches potentially impacted by various pollution sources. In 2007, 50 percent of the beaches had no known potential sources of pollution.

For More Information

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

For information about beaches in New Hampshire:
www.des.state.nh.us/Beaches/index.asp

Figure 2: Beach notification actions by duration.

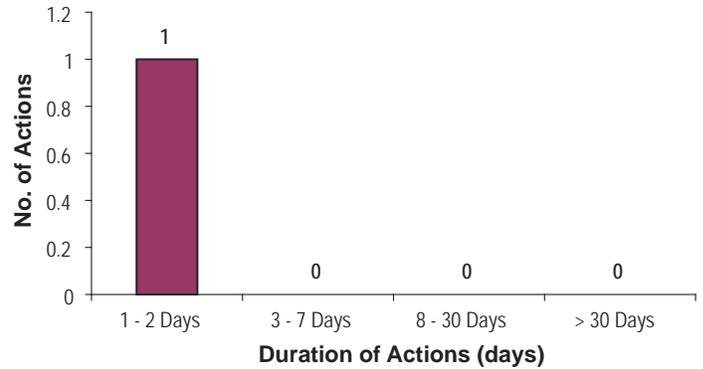


Figure 3: Beach days with and without notification actions.

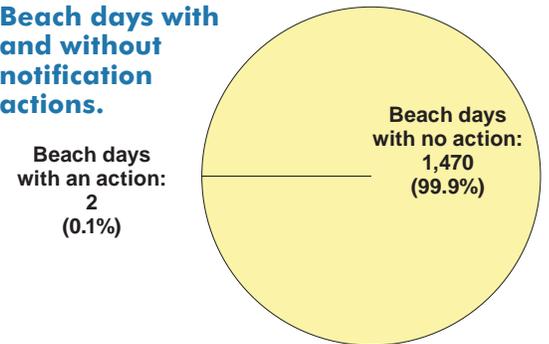


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2005–2007.

	2005	2006	2007
Number of monitored beaches	16	16	16
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	1	5	1
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	6%	31%	6%
Percentage of beach days affected by notification actions	<1%	2%	<1%

Figure 4: Percent of monitored beaches potentially impacted by pollution sources (16 beaches).

