



EPA's BEACH Report:

South Carolina 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.

South Carolina's beaches are important components of the state's tourism industry. The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, in conjunction with local governments, regularly monitors coastal beaches for the bacterial indicator enterococci to assure residents and tourists that the water is safe for wading, swimming, surfing, and other activities. The program's goal is to allow the public to make informed decisions about their ocean water recreational activities and the potential for bacteria-related health effects.

This fact sheet summarizes beach monitoring and notification data submitted to EPA by the State of South Carolina for the 2009 swimming season.

The beach program staff in South Carolina invite you to log onto our Web site: www.scdhec.gov/beach, where you will find up-to-date monitoring and advisory data and information to make your beach going experience happy and healthy.

May 15, 2010 has been declared Healthy Beach Awareness Day. Come to South Carolina's coast and find smiling faces and beautiful places.

Figure 1. South Carolina coastal counties.

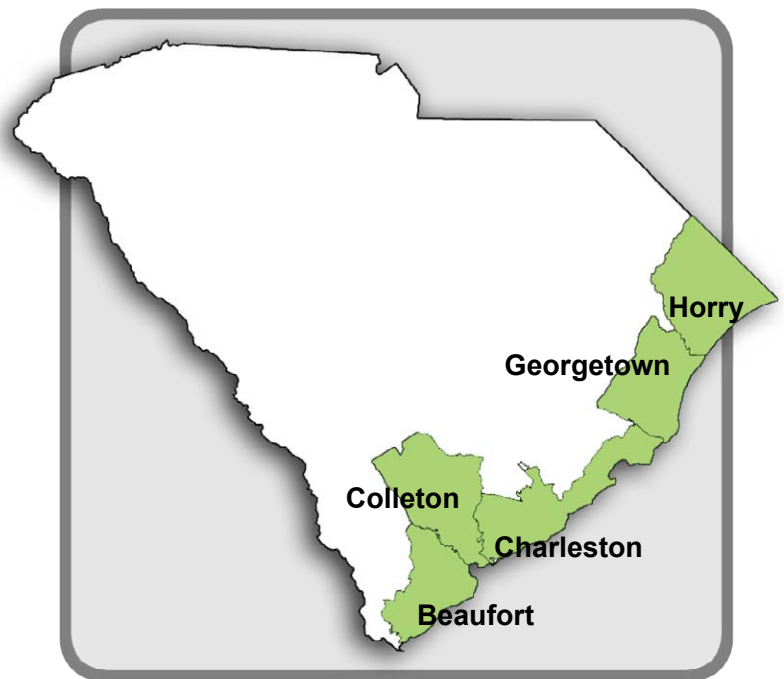


Table 1. Breakdown of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2009.

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
BEAUFORT	4	4	0
CHARLESTON	5	5	0
COLLETON	1	1	0
GEORGETOWN	5	5	0
HORRY	8	8	0
TOTALS	23	23	0

2009 Summary Results

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

When water quality standards are exceeded at a particular beach, South Carolina's approach is to issue a beach advisory that warns people to avoid contact with the ocean water. A total of 4 monitored beaches had at least one advisory issued during the 2009 swimming season. All of South Carolina's 6 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 South Carolina's 2009 swimming season, actions were reported less than 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.

What pollution sources possibly affect investigated monitored beaches?

Figure 4 displays the percentage of South Carolina's investigated monitored beaches possibly affected by various pollution sources. In 2009, 83 percent of the beaches were listed as having no known sources of pollution.

For More Information

For general information about beaches:

www.epa.gov/beaches/

Information regarding sample results is available at the South Carolina DHEC Web site at www.scdhec.gov, www.earth911.com or by contacting DHEC at (843) 238-4378.

Figure 2: Beach notification actions by duration.

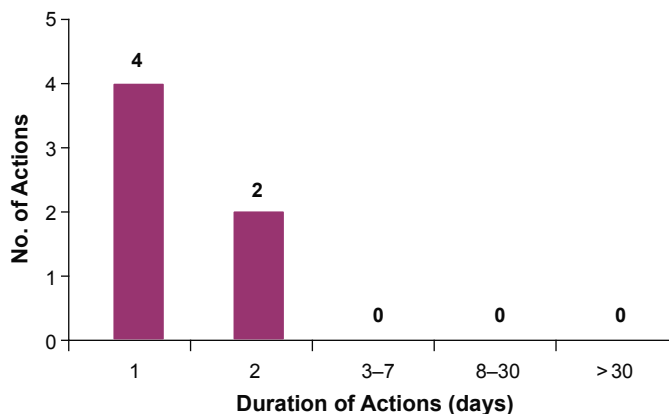


Figure 3: Beach days with and without notification actions.

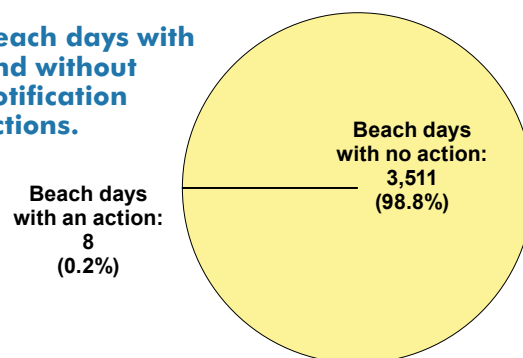


Table 2. Beach notification actions, 2007-2009.

	2007	2008	2009
Number of monitored beaches	23	23	23
Number of beaches affected by notification actions	10	7	4
Percentage of beaches affected by notification actions	43%	30%	17%
Percentage of beach days affected by notification actions	2%	1%	< 1%

Figure 4: Percent of investigated monitored beaches affected by possible pollution sources (23 beaches).

