

# EPA's BEACH Report: Louisiana 2011 Swimming Season

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## Introduction

The Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act of 2000 authorizes EPA to provide grants to coastal and Great Lakes states, territories, and eligible tribes to monitor their coastal beaches for bacteria that indicate the possible presence of disease-causing pathogens and to notify the public when there is a potential risk to public health. The BEACH Act requires that recipients of those grants report their coastal beach monitoring and notification data to EPA. This fact sheet highlights the data submitted to EPA by the State of Louisiana for the 2011 swimming season.

## 2011 Swimming Season Monitoring and Notification Actions

Louisiana reports 28 coastal beaches located in six parishes (Figure 1). Louisiana monitored 24 of these beaches during the 2011 swimming season (Table 1). When monitoring results at swimming beaches show that levels of specific indicator bacteria in the water exceed applicable water quality standards, Louisiana officials issue a beach advisory, warning people of possible risks of swimming or close the beach to public swimming until further monitoring finds that water quality complies with applicable standards.

### *How many beaches had notification actions?*

In 2011 of the 24 coastal beaches that Louisiana monitored, 22 (92 percent) had at least one notification action (Figure 2). This is an increase in percentage from 2010 when 20 of 27 (74 percent) monitored beaches had actions. In total numbers, however, it is only an increase of two beaches.

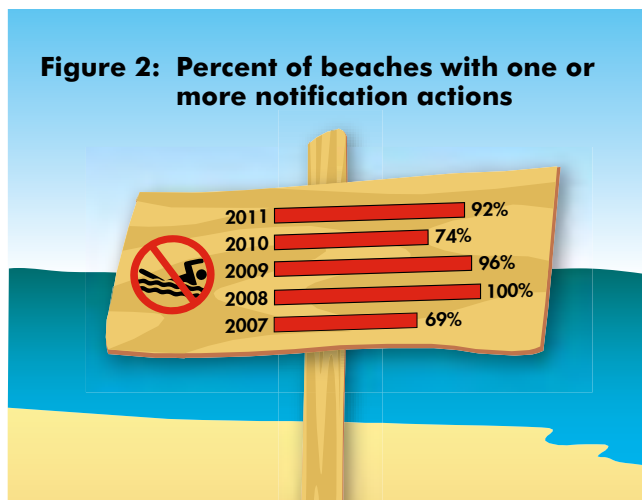
**Figure 1. Louisiana coastal parishes.**



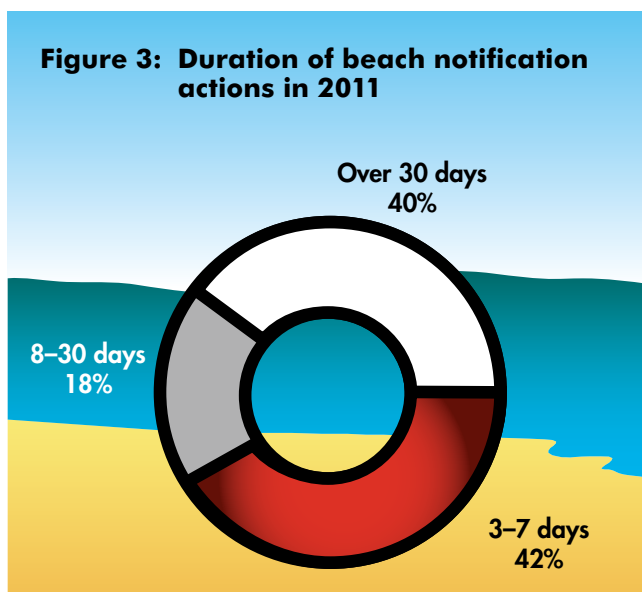
**Table 1. Number of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by parish for 2011.**

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
CALCASIEU	2	2	0
CAMERON	13	12	1
JEFFERSON	7	7	0
LAFOURCHE	4	1	3
ST. MARY	1	1	0
ST. TAMMANY	1	1	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>

**Figure 2: Percent of beaches with one or more notification actions**



**Figure 3: Duration of beach notification actions in 2011**



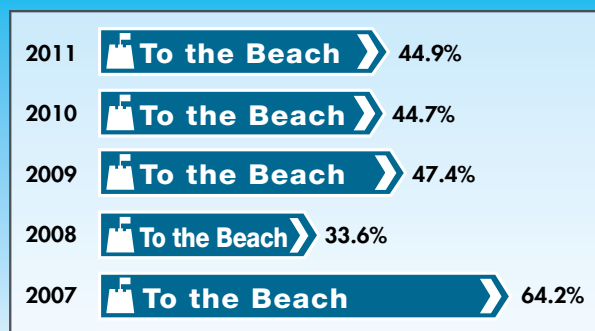
**How many notification actions were issued and how long did they last?**

Louisiana issued 57 notification actions during the 2011 swimming season. Typically Louisiana lifts an action when follow-up monitoring indicates that water quality complies with applicable standards. Notification action durations in Louisiana in 2011 ranged from 3 days (2 actions) to over 100 days (14 actions).

**What percentage of days were beaches under a notification action?**

EPA calculates the total available beach days and the number of beach days with notification actions to better track trends over time. Total available beach days are determined by multiplying the length of the beach season by the number of beaches in the state. For 2011 EPA calculated

**Figure 4: Percent of beach days open and safe for swimming**



that 4,392 beach days were associated with the swimming seasons of the 24 monitored Louisiana beaches. Louisiana reported notification actions on 2,421 days, meaning that beaches were open and safe for swimming about 45 percent of the time. (Figure 4). Unfortunately, Louisiana beaches continued to experience lingering impacts from recent hurricanes and the 2010 explosion of the BP-leased Deepwater Horizon offshore drilling platform.

**For More Information**

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For general information about beaches visit:  
<http://water.epa.gov/type/oceb/beaches/>.

For information about a specific beach visit:  
<http://watersgeo.epa.gov/beacon2/>.