

EPA's BEACH Report:

New Hampshire 2011 Swimming Season

August 2012

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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 New Hampshire for the 2011 swimming season.

2011 Swimming Season Monitoring and Notification Actions

New Hampshire monitored 16 coastal beaches in Rockingham County during the 2011 swimming season (Figure 1 and Table 1). When monitoring results at swimming beaches show that levels of specific indicator bacteria in the water exceed applicable water quality standards, New Hampshire officials issue a beach advisory, warning people of possible risks of swimming.

How many beaches had notification actions?

In 2011 of the 16 coastal beaches that New Hampshire monitored, 3 (19 percent) had at least one notification action (Figure 2). This is the lowest percentage since 2007.

Figure 1. New Hampshire coastal county.

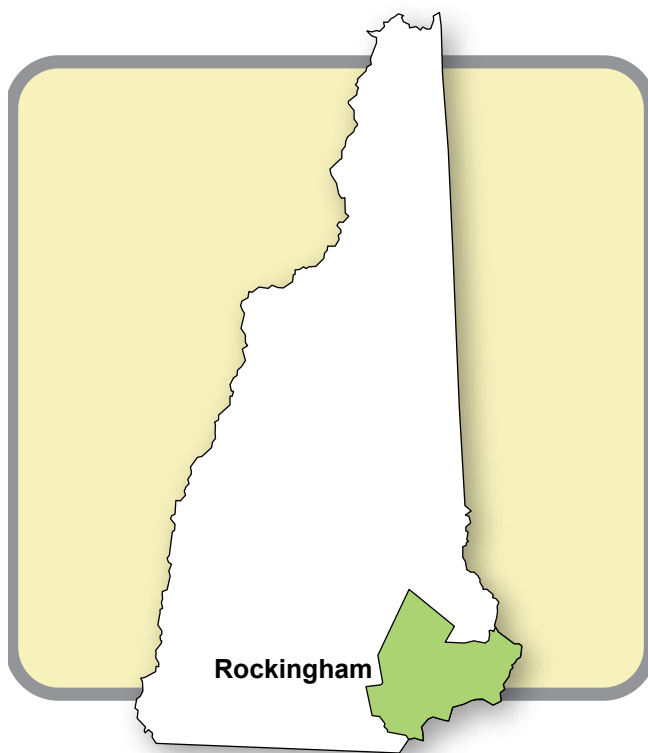


Table 1. Number of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2011.

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

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

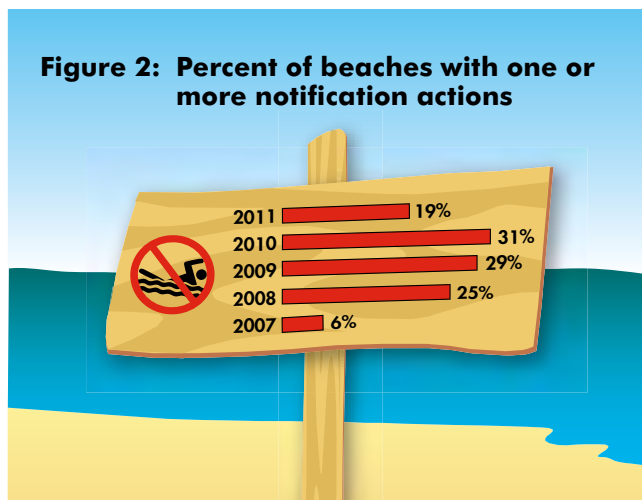
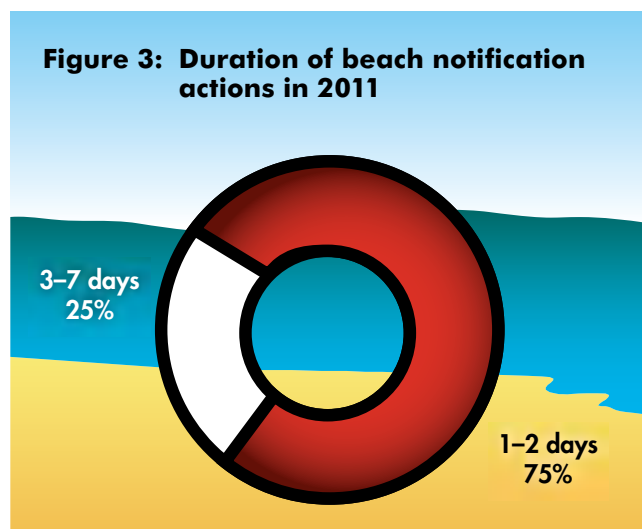


Figure 3: Duration of beach notification actions in 2011



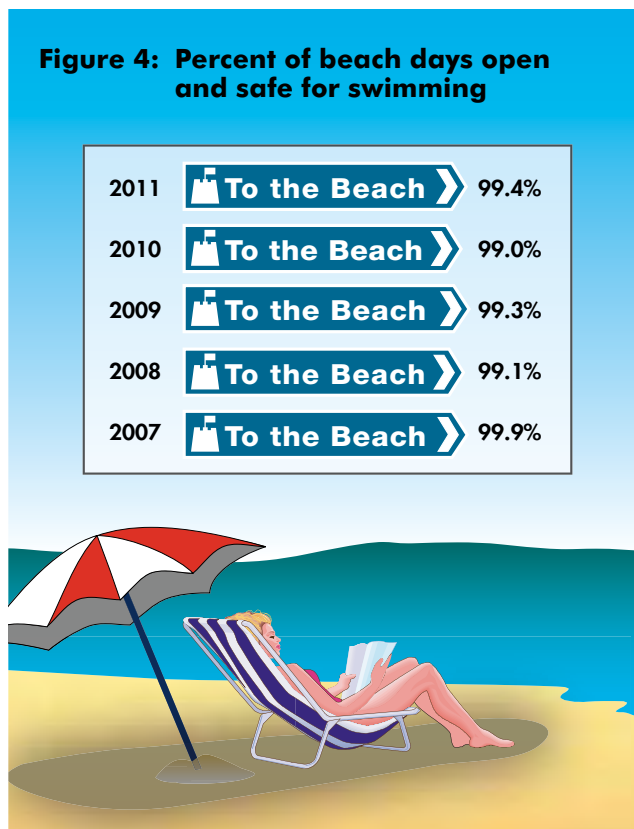
How many notification actions were issued and how long did they last?

New Hampshire issued four notification actions during the 2011 swimming season. Typically New Hampshire lifts an action when follow-up monitoring indicates that water quality complies with applicable standards. For three of the actions (75 percent) water quality returned to normal and beaches were deemed safe for swimming within one or two days (Figure 3).

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 that 1,568 beach days were associated with the

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



swimming seasons of the 16 monitored New Hampshire beaches. New Hampshire reported notification actions on 9 days, meaning that beaches were open and safe for swimming over 99 percent of the time. This continues the trend of consistently high percentages of open beach days at state beaches (Figure 4).

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/>.