

EPA's BEACH Report: Oregon 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 Oregon for the 2011 swimming season.

2011 Swimming Season Monitoring and Notification Actions

Oregon reports 92 coastal beaches located in seven counties (Figure 1). Oregon monitored 26 of those 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, Oregon officials issue a beach advisory, warning people of possible risks of swimming.

How many beaches had notification actions?

In 2011 of the 26 coastal beaches that Oregon monitored, 6 (23 percent) had at least one notification action (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Oregon coastal counties.

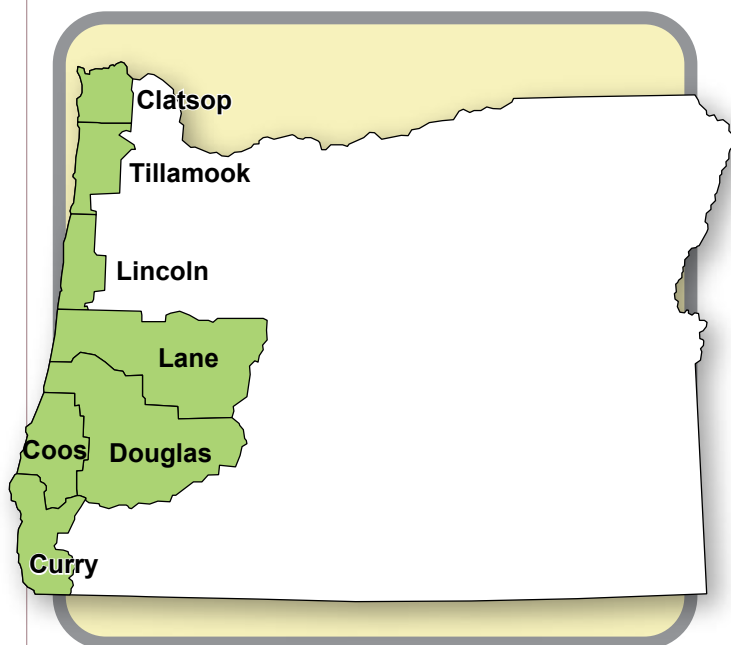


Table 1. Number of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2011.

| County | Total Beaches | Monitored | Not Monitored |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| CLATSOP | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| COOS | 8 | 3 | 5 |
| CURRY | 25 | 6 | 9 |
| DOUGLAS | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| LANE | 12 | 1 | 11 |
| LINCOLN | 24 | 4 | 20 |
| TILLAMOOK | 13 | 6 | 7 |
| TOTALS | 92 | 26 | 66 |

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

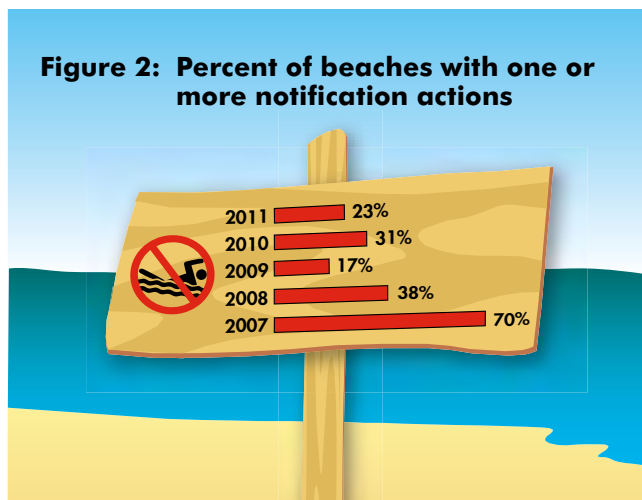
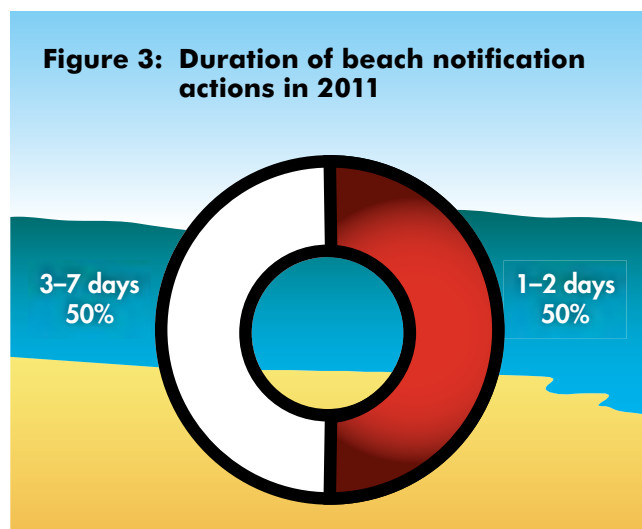


Figure 3: Duration of beach notification actions in 2011



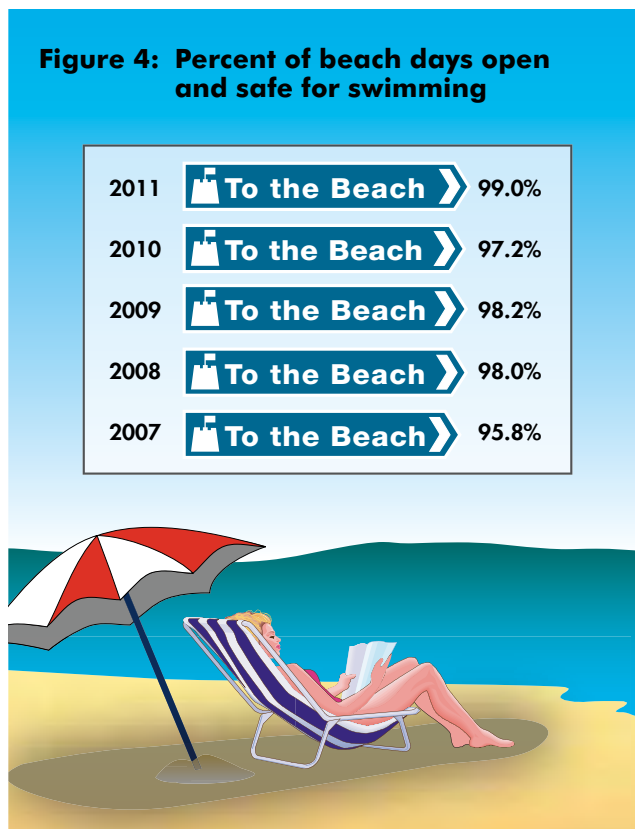
How many notification actions were issued and how long did they last?

Oregon issued eight notification actions during the 2011 swimming season. Typically Oregon lifts an action when follow-up monitoring indicates that water quality complies with applicable standards. Water quality returned to normal and beaches were deemed safe for swimming within a week in all cases (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

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



that 2,262 beach days were associated with the swimming seasons of the 26 monitored Oregon beaches. Oregon reported notification actions on 22 days, meaning that beaches were open and safe for swimming about 99 percent of the time. This improves on 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/>.