

# EPA's BEACH Report: New Jersey 2012 Swimming Season

September 2013

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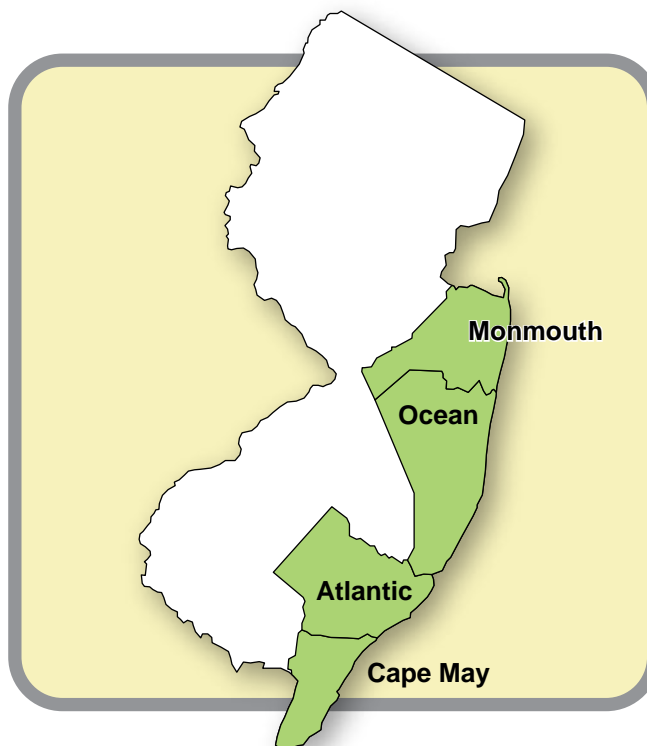
## Introduction

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 Jersey for the 2012 swimming season.

## 2012 Swimming Season Monitoring and Notification Actions

New Jersey monitored 315 coastal beaches in four counties during the 2012 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 Jersey 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. In some cases, advisories and closings are issued preemptively (i.e., without having actual bacteria monitoring results) due to storms or other conditions that might affect swimmer safety.

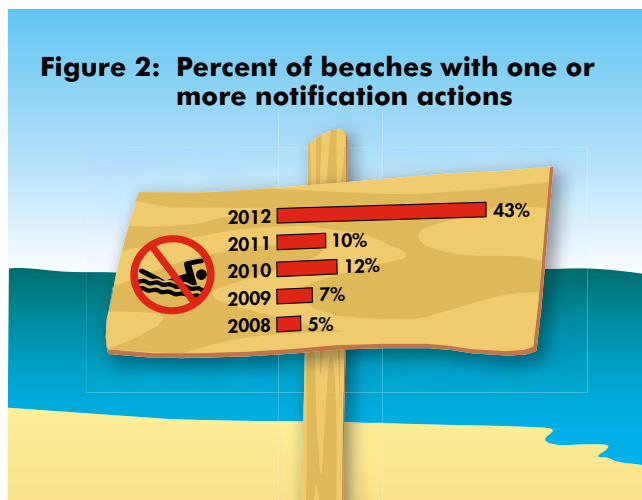
**Figure 1. New Jersey coastal counties**



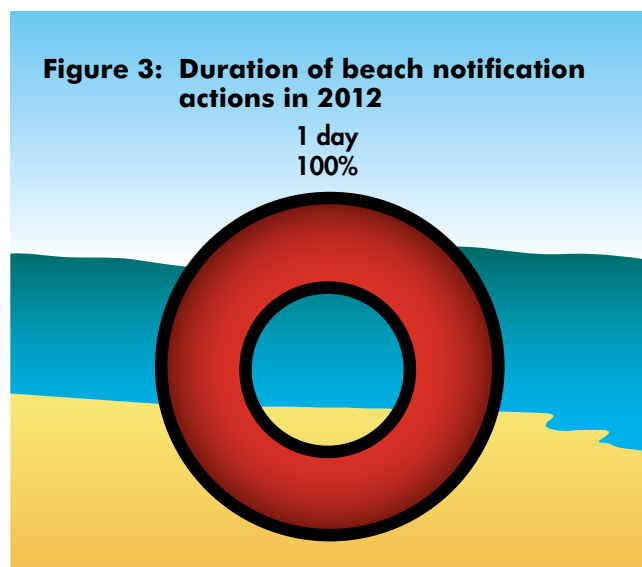
**Table 1. Number of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2012**

County	Total Beaches	Monitored
ATLANTIC	209	44
CAPE MAY	369	70
MONMOUTH	176	44
OCEAN	524	157
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,278</b>	<b>315</b>

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



**Figure 3: Duration of beach notification actions in 2012**



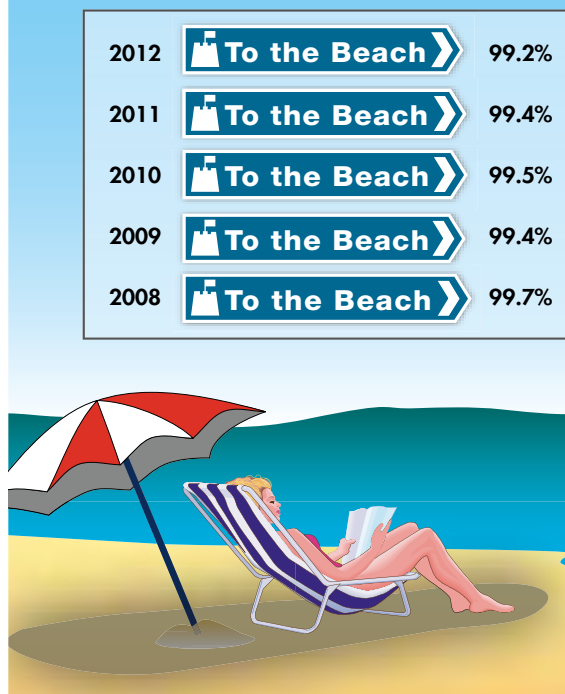
#### **How many beaches had notification actions?**

In 2012, of the 315 coastal beaches that New Jersey monitored, 136 (43 percent) had at least one notification action (Figure 2). The primary reason for the increase of beaches with actions was a sewer overflow that occurred on June 16, 2012 on Long Beach Island (Ocean County). Many beaches in this stretch were closed for a day for cleanup and inspection.

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

New Jersey issued 237 notification actions during the 2012 swimming season. Typically New Jersey lifts an action when follow-up monitoring indicates that water quality complies with applicable standards. For all the actions (100 percent) water quality returned to normal and beaches were deemed safe for swimming within one day (Figure 3).

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



#### **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 2012 EPA calculated that 30,879 beach days were associated with the swimming seasons of the 315 monitored New Jersey beaches. New Jersey reported notification actions on 237 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 beaches in New Jersey (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/>.