

EPA's BEACH Report:

Grand Portage 2012 Swimming Season

September 2013

EPA 820-F-13-021

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 Grand Portage Band of the Chippewa for the 2012 swimming season.

2012 Swimming Season Monitoring and Notification Actions

The Grand Portage Band monitored ten coastal beaches 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, Grand Portage Band officials issue a beach advisory, warning people of possible risks of swimming.

How many beaches had notification actions?

In 2012, of the ten coastal beaches that the Grand Portage Band monitored, nine (90 percent) had at least one notification action (Figure 2). Several widespread heavy storms during the swimming season, including record rainfall totals on June 19 and 20, 2012, caused the tribe to close their beaches more often than usual.

Figure 1. Grand Portage Reservation

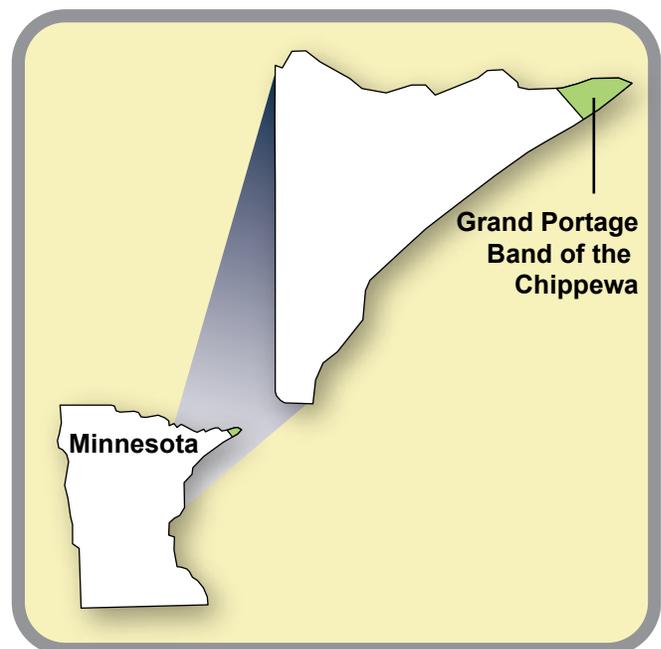


Table 1. Number of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches for 2012

	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
GRAND PORTAGE	10	10	0

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

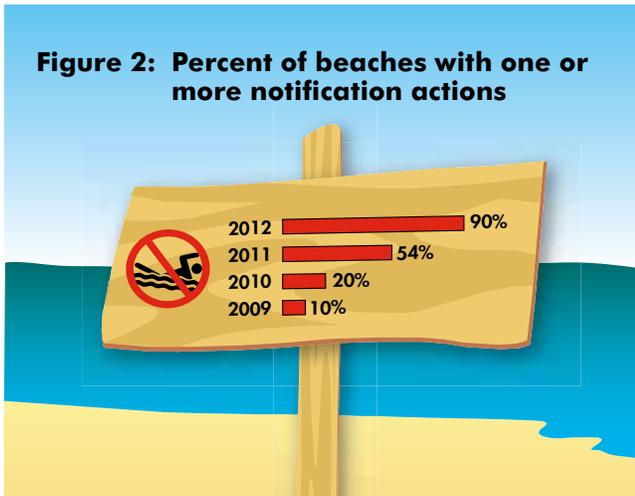
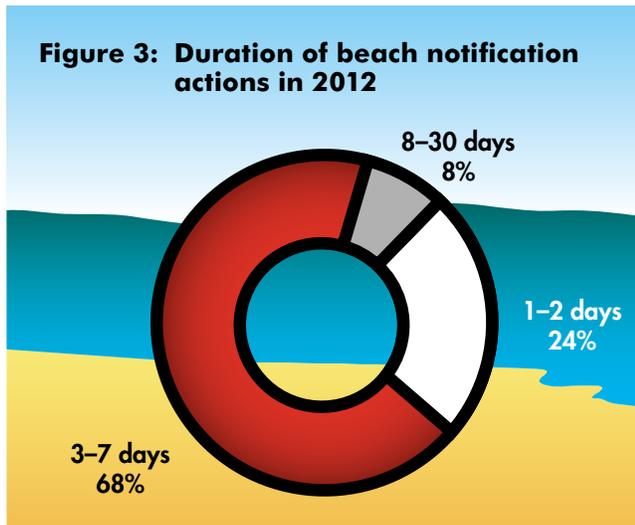


Figure 3: Duration of beach notification actions in 2012



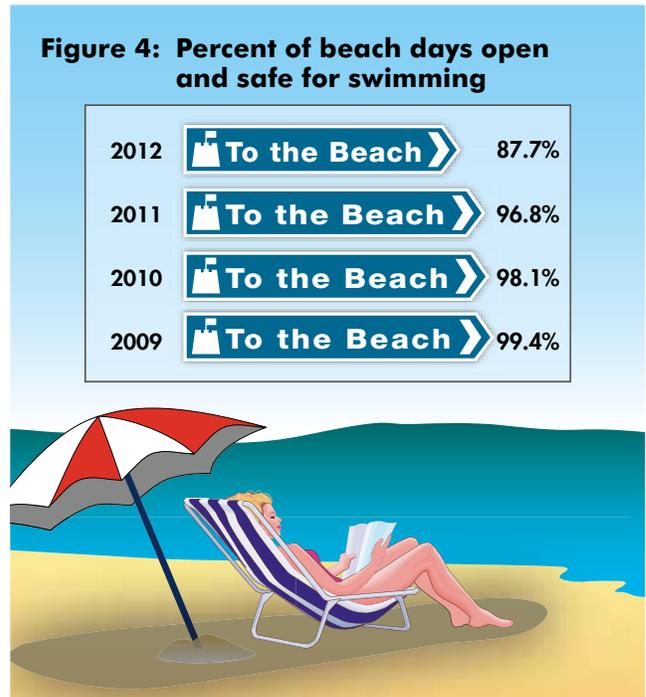
How many notification actions were issued and how long did they last?

The Grand Portage Band issued 25 notification actions during the 2012 swimming season. The Grand Portage Band lifts an action when follow-up monitoring indicates that water quality complies with applicable standards. In most cases (92 percent) water quality returned to normal and beaches were deemed safe for swimming within a week (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

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



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 1,210 beach days were associated with the swimming seasons of the ten monitored Grand Portage Band beaches. The Grand Portage Band reported notification actions on 149 days, meaning that beaches were open and safe for swimming about 88 percent of the time (Figure 4). The unusual amount of rain in 2012 was the primary cause of the decrease.

For More Information

For information about the Grand Portage Band of the Chippewa beach program contact:

Margaret Watkins
 Environmental Department
 Tel: 218-475-2415
 e-mail: Watkins@boreal.org

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/>.