

# EPA's BEACH Report: Delaware 2012 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 Delaware for the 2012 swimming season.

## 2012 Swimming Season Monitoring and Notification Actions

Delaware monitored 15 coastal beaches in Sussex County 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, Delaware 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 2012, of the 15 coastal beaches that Delaware monitored, only one (seven percent) had a notification action (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Delaware coastal counties

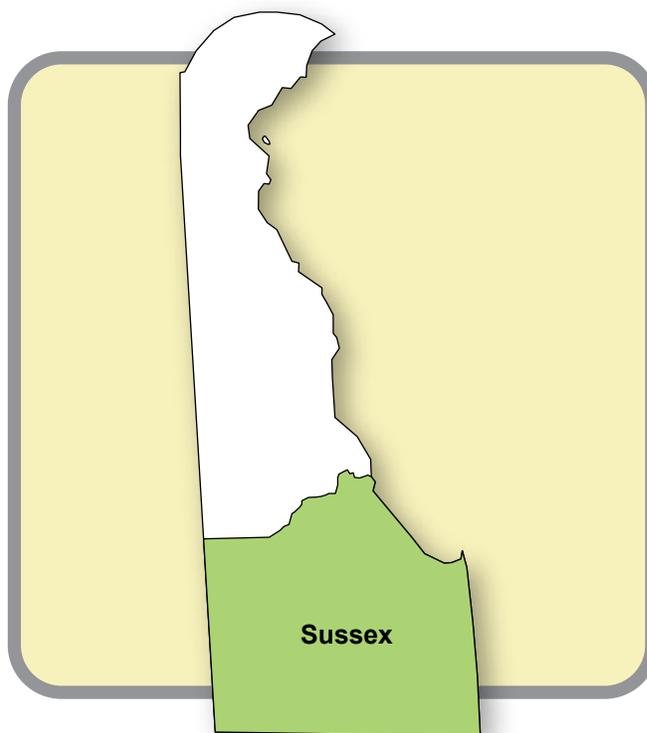
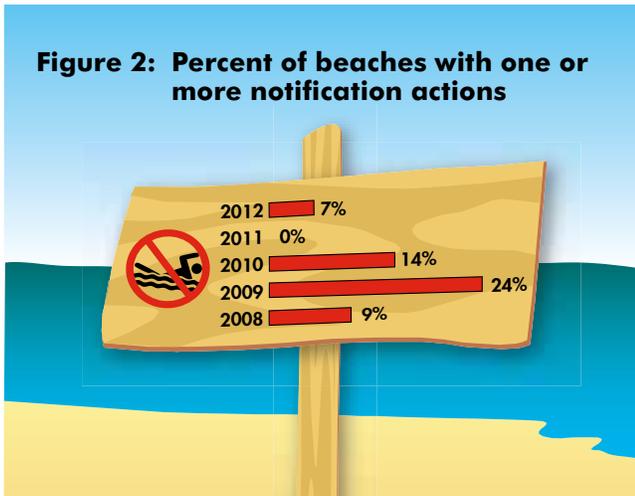


Table 1. Number of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by county for 2012

County	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
SUSSEX	15	15	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>

**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?**

Delaware issued one notification action that lasted one day during the 2012 swimming season. Typically Delaware lifts an action when follow-up monitoring indicates that water quality complies with applicable standards.

**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

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



that 1,890 beach days were associated with the swimming seasons of the 15 monitored Delaware beaches. Delaware reported notification actions on 1 day, meaning that beaches were open and safe for swimming 99.9 percent of the time. This continues the trend of consistently high percentages of open beach days at beaches in Delaware (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/>.