

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

## 2012 Swimming Season Monitoring and Notification Actions

Puerto Rico monitored 22 coastal beaches located in 18 municipalities 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, Puerto Rico officials issue a beach advisory, warning people of possible risks of swimming.

### How many beaches had notification actions?

In 2012, of the 22 coastal beaches that Puerto Rico monitored, ten (46 percent) had at least one notification action (Figure 2).

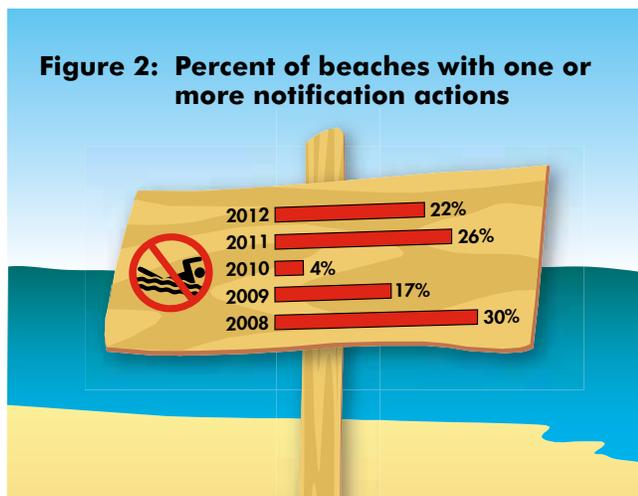
Figure 1. Puerto Rico



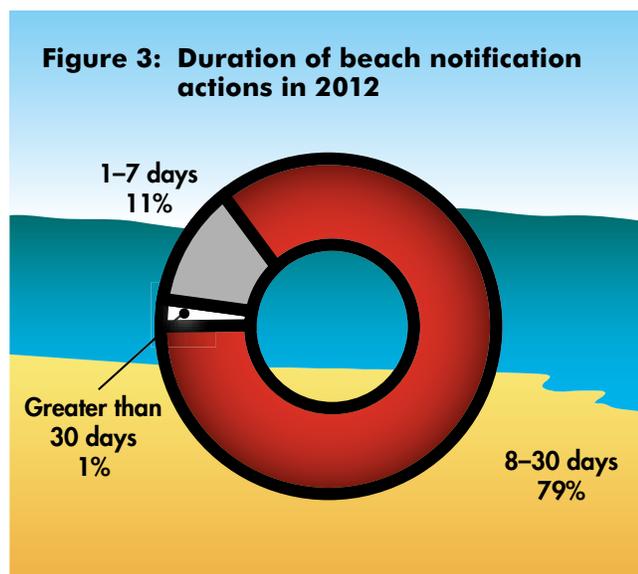
Table 1. Number of monitored and unmonitored coastal beaches by municipality for 2012

Municipality	Total Beaches	Monitored	Not Monitored
AGUADA	1	1	0
AGUADILLA	1	1	0
ANASCO	1	1	0
ARROYO	1	1	0
CABO ROJO	4	4	0
CAROLINA	1	1	0
CULEBRA	1	1	0
DORADO	1	1	0
FAJARDO	1	1	0
GUANICA	2	2	0
HUMACAO	1	1	0
LUQUILLO	1	1	0
PATILLAS	1	1	0
RINCON	1	1	0
SAN JUAN	1	1	0
TOA BAJA	1	1	0
VEGA ALTA	1	1	0
VEGA BAJA	1	1	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</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?**

Puerto Rico issued 19 notification actions during the 2012 swimming season. Typically Puerto Rico lifts an action when follow-up monitoring indicates that water quality complies with applicable standards (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

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



beaches in the state. For 2012 EPA calculated that 8,030 beach days were associated with the swimming seasons of the 22 monitored Puerto Rico beaches. Puerto Rico reported notification actions on 334 days, meaning that beaches were open and safe for swimming about 96 percent of the time. This continues the trend of consistently high percentages of open beach days at beaches in Puerto Rico (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/>.