



## Heal the Bay

### **2012 End of Summer Beach Report Card:**

### **California**

#### **Executive Summary**

##### **Overview**

Heal the Bay's End of Summer Beach Report Card® (BRC) provides beachgoers with essential water quality information by grading 446 monitoring locations in California, from Humboldt County south through San Diego County. The data analyzed for this report was collected from Memorial Day through Labor Day 2012.

The BRC is based on the routine monitoring data provided by over 20 different agencies and dischargers, and would not be possible without their cooperation. These agencies collect and analyze marine water samples for bacteria that indicate pollution from numerous sources, including fecal waste. The better the grade a location receives, the lower the risk of illness to beach users. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at beaches.

Once again, most beaches in California earned excellent water quality grades, with 96% of sampled sites receiving A or B grades during the high-use beach-going season.

##### **Ocean water quality monitoring and public health in jeopardy**

Two recent proposals from the United States Environmental Protection (USEPA) may have a devastating effect on beach water quality programs throughout the entire country in the coming year. First, beach water quality monitoring programs throughout the U.S. may be in jeopardy, as the current Administration's proposed budget for 2013 eliminates all BEACH Act grant funding. Many states, including Oregon and Washington rely heavily on federal funding in order to develop and implement beach monitoring and notification programs. Many county beach programs will also be in jeopardy throughout California, especially northern counties that depend primarily on federal funding. Second, the EPA is proposing new acceptable bacteria levels in recreational waters that miss a critical opportunity to better protect the public from the dangers of swimming in polluted water. In fact, in some respects, the draft criteria are even less protective than the 25-year-old criteria they would replace.

The beachgoers, boaters and recreational water users of the United States deserve functional federal and state recreational water quality programs in order to preserve and improve public health protection. If implemented, the current proposals will take a huge step backwards in

public health protection. As a result, many beachgoers throughout the entire country will be swimming at their own risk.

### **Beach Breakdown**

Water quality data collected at California beaches this past summer improved with 4% more A and B grades over last summer, and this summer was one of the cleanest years on record. Despite a few problem areas, statewide water quality was very good with 96% A and B grades (92% A grades). There were 20 locations (4%) throughout the state that received fair-to-poor water quality grades (9 Cs and 11 Fs).

**San Diego County:** Overall water quality at beaches in San Diego was excellent and very similar to last summer, with all locations receiving an A grade.

The City of San Diego recently began conducting a bacteria source tracking study at Mission Bay's Visitor's Center – projection of Clairemont. This site was selected based on four primary criteria 1) presence of active storm drains; 2) frequency of water quality exceedances; 3) previous implementation of management action; and 4) high swimmer usage. Results from a previous source identification study at this location concluded that birds were a major source of fecal bacteria in Mission Bay, which could be amplified by irrigation, runoff, storm drains, intertidal sediments and rotting kelp (wrack) on the beach. The four week study will be conducted during September and October, before the onset of the wet season.

Beaches in San Diego County near the Mexico border were closed for a week just before Labor Day due to a massive spill near Tijuana. An estimated five million gallons of raw sewage was released from a collapsed pipe in Playas de Tijuana that took three days to repair. South County beaches were closed on August 28. Imperial Beach locations were reopened on August 31 and Borderfield Park and the Tijuana Estuary locations were opened September 4.

**Orange County:** Water quality at beaches in Orange County this past summer was excellent overall with 93% of beaches receiving an A grade. Poche Beach still continues to have poor water quality and received an F grade this summer. Newport Bay's Garnet Avenue (C grade) received the only other grade lower than an A or B this summer. The historically poor water quality at Doheny Beach (North Beach) continues to show improvement, receiving an A grade for the second consecutive summer. Last summer, two of four monitoring locations at Dana Point's Baby Beach received C grades. Both locations improved to A and B grades in this report [Baby Beach buoy line (B) and Baby Beach swim area (A)].

There were five known sewage spills in Orange County this past summer. Approximately 100 gallons was released in Newport Bay resulting in a closure at Port Calypso Marina for 2 days starting on July 30th. A spill of approximately 450 gallons into Huntington Harbor resulted in a closure from the Boat Launch to Bluewater Lane for two days beginning on August 11th. The largest spill of the summer was a release of approximately 2800 gallons into Newport Bay that resulted in beach closures from August 16 until August 19 at Balboa Island Bridge to Harbor Patrol Beach. Another spill of approximately 50 gallons in Newport Bay resulted in closure at Balboa Island Yacht Club docks and Balboa Island East Bay Front from Park Ave to South Bay Front for three days beginning August 21. The final spill of this

summer in Orange County occurred after a sewage pump failure resulted in an estimated 1000 gallons of raw sewage being released into the 33<sup>rd</sup> Street Channel in Newport Bay. As a result, 38<sup>th</sup> Street Beach (and a portion of the channel) was closed for two days.

**Los Angeles County:** Los Angeles County water quality grades improved 2% this summer to 87% A and B grades. Avalon Beach is no stranger to Heal the Bay's infamous "Beach Bummer" list, which marks the 10 most polluted beaches throughout California in our annual report released in May. Unfortunately the negative trend has continued at Avalon Beach this summer, as all five monitoring locations exhibited extremely poor water quality by scoring all F grades. This is the eighth summer in a row that none of the five monitoring locations have received A or B grades. Although Clean Beach Initiative (CBI) funding has provided a partial subsidy to help replace aging sewer infrastructure throughout the city, water quality is still poor.

In February of 2012, the Regional Board issued a Draft Cease and Desist Order (CDO) to the City of Avalon for illegally discharging polluted water. Concurrently, the Regional Board adopted a Bacteria TMDL for Avalon Harbor. These regulatory actions will now require the City of Avalon to meet and maintain all state water quality monitoring standards or face hefty fines and penalties. Though it may take time and extensive work before Avalon's beach water quality improves, we are encouraged with the City of Avalon's progress and at the same time relieved that they will finally be held accountable for decades of poor water quality. Heal the Bay looks forward to seeing much improved beach water quality at Avalon Beach in the near future.

This is the third consecutive summer that the Malibu Pier (50 yards east) has displayed poor water quality, earning an F grade in this report. Despite numerous site visits by Heal the Bay staff, a pollution source has yet to be identified. Heal the Bay will continue to work with Los Angeles County Environmental Health to further investigate potential bacteria sources at this location.

Once again, poor water quality grades continue to persist at Cabrillo Beach in San Pedro. Cabrillo Beach harborside at the restrooms has historically poor water quality and earned an F grade this summer despite extensive water quality improvement projects throughout the past few years including: replacement of beach sand in the intertidal zone, removal of the rock jetty, installation of water circulation pumps, and installation of bird exclusion devices. With more than \$15 million invested in improving water quality at Cabrillo's harborside, the beach is still violating bacteria TMDL limits. In a last-ditch effort towards improving beach water quality at the inner beach, the City of Los Angeles has agreed to: 1) expand existing bird exclusion structure into the tidal zone and across the beach face; 2) design and implement an improved water circulation system; and 3) commence an in-depth source identification study to potentially identify and mitigate sources of bacteria. The bird exclusion device structure and circulation system are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2012.

Overall water quality at Santa Monica Bay beaches was very good. Santa Monica Bay beaches had better water quality than last summer, with 65 (94%) of 69 monitoring locations receiving A or B grades (compared to 89% last year). This is the third year in row that the chronically polluted Santa Monica Pier earned a much improved A grade. A combination of water quality improvement projects including new storm drain infrastructure, runoff diversion replacement and

the installation of bird exclusion nets under part of the pier have contributed to the drastically improved grades. Marie Canyon's storm drain at Puerco Beach (24572 Malibu Rd.) showed significant water quality improvement this summer going from an F grade to an A grade.

This summer, Long Beach's beach grades, while still good, slipped from last summer with 85% A or B grades (100% A or B grades last summer). However, this is still a drastic improvement from Long Beach's extensive history of chronic beach pollution even during dry weather. Only two Long Beach beaches received below an A or B grade (Alamitos Bay – 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Bridge and Bayshore (C) and Alamitos Bay – 56<sup>th</sup> Place (C). In general, beach water quality at the main beaches in Long Beach tends to be negatively impacted by the Los Angeles River.

The City of Long Beach has remained dedicated to improving beach water quality through the implementation of several mitigation projects, including at Colorado Lagoon, which has had a long history of water quality impairment. After successful completion of Phase 1 of the Colorado Lagoon Project, which included installing bioswales, storm drain diversions and removing large amounts of bioaccumulation, the City of Long Beach celebrated the re-opening of the Colorado Lagoon this summer on August 23. Phase 2 of the project, which includes securing funding (approximately \$12 million) for an open channel to connect the lagoon to Marine Stadium, is scheduled for completion within the next two years.

In 2005 the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board imposed a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for bacteria in Santa Monica Bay. This means every beach from the Ventura County line south to Palos Verdes has to meet state beach bacteria health standards 100% of the time during the AB411 period (April 1 through October 31). Table 2 (at the end of this report) shows Santa Monica Bay beach water quality exceedances so far for the AB411 period (the number of times the beach exceeded legal bacteria levels) between April 1 and September 3.

There were no known sewage spills in Los Angeles County that resulted in beach closures this summer.

**Ventura County:** Overall water quality at beaches throughout Ventura County remains among the best in the state. All monitored beaches received A grades in this report.

There were no known sewage spills in Ventura County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**Santa Barbara County:** The water quality at beaches in Santa Barbara County was excellent this summer with all 15 (100%) monitoring locations receiving A grades, a 13% improvement from last year. Last summer, Gaviota State Beach (C) and Arroyo Burro (F) were the only two locations that earned fair to poor water quality grades.

South Coast Beach Communities Septic-to-Sewer project, that will ultimately rid seven miles of Santa Barbara County coastline of 130 septic systems, is partially finished. Throughout May and June sewer construction eliminated 56 septic systems from the Sandyland and Sand Point stretch of beach. Sewer construction for the Rincon area is expected to be underway in early 2013. As a part of the \$2 million CBI grant, the Carpinteria Sanitary District will do beach water monitoring to track the effectiveness of the septic system removals<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Information provided by Heal the Ocean in Santa Barbara

There were no known sewage spills in Santa Barbara County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**San Luis Obispo County:** Water quality at beaches in San Luis Obispo County was excellent again this past summer, with all 20 (100%) monitoring locations receiving A grades. Pismo Beach Pier (A) improved greatly after receiving failing grades the past two summers, and receiving the poorest grades in the county for the past seven years in a row.

Numerous water quality improvement projects, including a source identification and abatement study and the installation of bird netting under the pier, may have led to improved water quality this summer.

There was one known sewage spill in San Luis Obispo County this past summer that resulted in a beach closure. An estimated 600 gallons of sewage was released into a storm drain upstream of Shell Beach. The beach was closed on July 24<sup>th</sup> for one day as a precaution.

**Monterey County:** Beach water quality continued to improve in Monterey County this summer with all eight (100%) monitoring locations receiving A or B grades (7 A grades and 1 B grade).

There were no known sewage spills in Monterey County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**Santa Cruz County:** Water quality in Santa Cruz was very similar to last summer with 77% of beaches receiving A grades. The chronically poor water quality at Cowell Beach continues to persist, with two out of three monitoring locations at Cowell receiving the worst grades in the county (F grades). Santa Cruz Environmental Health Service has been tracking the problem the past four summers and is fairly certain that quantities of decaying kelp on the beach are a major source of high bacteria in the area. Urban runoff may also be a potential source contributing to increased bacteria concentrations. Cowell Beach has been posted with a beach swimming advisory since June 5. Stanford University and the City of Santa Cruz are currently working on removing rotting beach wrack to determine if there is an association between beach wrack and elevated bacteria levels. Preliminary results will be available at the end of this month.

Capitola Beach (C) received the County's only other grade lower than an A or B. All other Santa Cruz county beaches scored excellent grades (A).

There were no known sewage spills in Santa Cruz County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**San Mateo County:** San Mateo's overall beach water quality improved from last summer (82% A or B grades last summer) with 91% (21 of 23 monitoring locations) earning A or B grades. Two locations displayed poor water quality this summer: Aquatic Park (F) and Fitzgerald Marine Reserve at San Vicente Creek (C).

There were no known sewage spills in San Mateo County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**Alameda County:** This is the sixth year in a row that Alameda County beaches have shown nearly perfect summer-time water quality, with all seven monitoring locations receiving (100%) A grades.

There was one known sewage spill in Alameda County on August 4 that resulted in a 24-hour beach closure at Crown Beach from Crab Cove to the Bath House.

**San Francisco County:** San Francisco County continues to exhibit excellent water quality grades this summer with all 14 (100%) locations receiving A or B grades. This is the second consecutive summer that Baker Beach at Lobos Creek, known for having historically poor water quality, has shown improvement and earned a B grade this summer.

There were no known sewage releases in San Francisco County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**Contra Costa County:** This summer, due to the small size of Keller Beach (approximately 300 feet), one of the three monitoring locations was dropped. Water quality at both Keller Beach monitoring locations improved from C to A grades.

There were no known sewage spills in Contra Costa County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**Marin County:** Water quality grades at beaches throughout Marin County were excellent again this summer and among the best in the state, with all 24 monitoring locations (100%) receiving A grades.

There were no known sewage spills in Marin County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**Sonoma County:** This is the fifth summer in a row Sonoma County's beaches earned superb water quality grades. All seven monitoring locations received A grades.

There were no known sewage spills in Sonoma County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**Mendocino:** Only three monitoring locations were monitored in Mendocino County frequently enough to earn grades in this report. All monitoring locations received A grades.

There were no known sewage spills in Mendocino County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

**Humboldt County:** Humboldt County's grades improved greatly from last summer with 80% (four out of five monitoring of locations) receiving A grades (40% last summer). The only location earning below an A or B grade was Trinidad State Beach near Mill Creek (C) for the second consecutive year.

There were no known sewage spills in Humboldt County reported to Heal the Bay this summer.

## **National Beach News**

### **Proposed Federal Funding Cuts Threaten Existence of Beach Programs**

In February 2012, the EPA released a budget proposal that included eliminating EPA's Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act (BEACH Act) Grant Program. Federal funding is critical, as it allows coastal and Great Lakes states to develop and implement water quality monitoring and notification programs. These programs allow state, local health and environmental protection agencies to routinely monitor and track water quality at the nation's beaches, as well as alert the public when bacteria levels in the water are unsafe by posting beach warnings or closing the beach.

Federal grants also help state governments establish and administer programs that inform the public about the risk of exposure to disease-causing microorganisms in the water at our nation's beaches. Swimming in polluted water exposes people to pathogens that can cause gastrointestinal illness, skin rashes and ear, eye and staph infections. The elimination of these BEACH Act grant funds will likely result in a reduction of information about these important public health concerns.

With the loss of this funding (approximately \$500,000 is allocated towards California's Beach Program) many county-run monitoring programs throughout the state will be negatively impacted, especially northern counties such as Monterey and Humboldt County which rely primarily on federal funding. Federal funding cuts may also jeopardize winter monitoring programs throughout the state; many winter monitoring programs exist as a result of these moneys. Americans rely on water quality monitoring and reporting to ensure that the water we swim, surf and play in is safe. The EPA's plan to cut the BEACH Act program is unacceptable and will immediately put the public's health at risk. The public deserves to know that the water is safe when they go to the beach. For more information on EPA's proposed funding cuts or to send a letter directly to EPA asking to restore the BEACH Act Grant Program, please go to [www.healthebay.org/get-involved/take-action](http://www.healthebay.org/get-involved/take-action)

### **EPA's Proposed Recreational Water Quality Criteria Fail to Protect Public Health**

The U.S. Congress approved the BEACH Act in 2000 requiring the EPA to develop modernized standards for water quality that would protect beach users from illnesses caused by pathogens such as viruses and bacteria. The revisions offer an important opportunity to improve beach water quality and ensure public health protection. However, the draft criteria released by EPA are far less protective of the public health of swimmers than current science and good public policy dictate.

#### **Top Public Health Concerns with EPA's Draft Criteria**

1. **Poses unacceptable health risks:** EPA believes it is acceptable for 1 in 28 swimmers to become ill with gastroenteritis from swimming at a beach that just meets EPA's proposed water quality criteria. Additionally, EPA does not adequately consider the risks of rashes and ear, eye and sinus infections – all of which are reported too often by swimmers at U.S. beaches.

2. **Fails to include latest science:** EPA does not base the draft criteria on the most recent and best available science. Numerous high-quality epidemiology studies have been conducted around the world, including at Santa Monica Bay and Doheny Beach in Southern California. Yet these studies have not been used to help develop the new beach criteria.
3. **Masks significant pollution:** The draft criteria only require polluters to take action if more than 25% of the samples taken contain bacteria over acceptable limits. This means polluters could be allowed to discharge to beaches at unsafe levels on one out of every four days without any deterrent. This approach could mask a serious pollution problem and expose families to an unnecessary risk of illness.
4. **Uses improper averaging:** EPA proposes the use of a seasonal geometric mean up to 90-days. This 90-day averaging will not reveal shorter-term pollution problems, therefore putting the public's health at risk. No one swims on an average day. A more protective approach would be a rolling 30-day geometric mean, which would identify pollution problems on a timelier basis.
5. **Provides no rapid testing methods:** The BEACH Act requires EPA to analyze rapid test methods, which could reduce the time-delay in obtaining information about polluted beaches from the current 18-24 hours (for older culture methods) to fewer than four hours, thus providing increased public health protection. EPA's proposal does not recommend rapid methods for use as a stand-alone method, meaning duplicate, slower culture samples would be required where rapid methods are used. The draft criteria do not provide incentives for states to move forward with rapid methods, nor do the criteria require states to implement rapid methods by a certain date – even for the most contaminated and heavily used beaches in the country.

The recreational water quality criteria have not been updated for 25 years and may not be revisited again until years from now, so it is extremely important for EPA to develop standards now that are protective of public health on a national level. Some aspects of EPA's proposal, such as recommending criteria for all recreational waterways, are a step in the right direction. However, most provisions of the proposed criteria are not sufficiently protective of public health.

## **California Beach News**

### **Funding California's Beach Program**

On Oct. 8, 2011 Senate Bill 482 was signed into law. This bill, which became effective on Jan. 1, 2012, allows all administrative rights and responsibilities for the beach program to be transferred from the State Department of Public Health to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). New responsibilities given to the SWRCB include adopting, amending, and enforcing the regulations, in consultation with the Department of Public Health.

SB 482 also allows the SWRCB to direct permit fees (up to \$1.8 million) towards California's Beach Program. This is a key element in ensuring that beach monitoring continues in California. Unfortunately, this year California's Department of Finance recommended that Governor Brown only approve \$1 million of the \$1.8 million allowed in the law. Of note, the estimated \$1.8 million is based on the minimum funding needed to sustain a model monitoring program in California. Therefore, any less than the full funding amount will put major strain on California's



entire beach program. Heal the Bay will continue to advocate for the full amount of state funding.

In preparation for streamlining its new responsibilities, the SWRCB is currently collecting information from municipalities, including annual beach monitoring program costs, current monitoring locations, and monitoring frequencies. It is extremely important that the SWRCB use this opportunity to develop protective monitoring and notification requirements in order for counties to qualify for these funds.

Some of Heal the Bay's monitoring requirement recommendations include:

- Beach water samples should be taken in areas of highest expected bacteria levels and highest recreational use.
- Monitoring agencies must continue to monitor at least 80% of the locations monitored prior to the 2008 state budget cuts.
- Sampling frequency should increase with beach use and/or public health risk.
- Public notification of current water quality should occur immediately after results are determined.
- Monitoring agencies and dischargers should be required to work together to streamline and enhance coastal monitoring for year-round public health protection.

### **Los Angeles County Municipal Storm Water Permit**

Heal the Bay and other local NGOs are currently leading efforts to ensure that the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board adopts a strong Los Angeles County municipal storm water permit (MS4). The last MS4 permit was adopted in 2001, prior to the adoption of critical bacteria TMDLs. Thus, it is extremely important that the MS4 include all bacteria TMDL numeric wasteload allocations (pollution limits) and associated compliance deadlines. As the Santa Monica Bay dry weather TMDLs are six years overdue for compliance, this action is particularly important to ensure that the TMDLs can be enforced. Other elements of the MS4 are also critical for the beaches program, such as the inclusion of routine monitoring locations. The adoption hearing for the MS4 is scheduled for October 4-5.

### **Los Angeles County – Clean Water, Clean Beaches Measure**

Despite steady water quality improvement throughout Los Angeles County, seven out of 10 most polluted beaches in California are located on the Los Angeles coast. To help mitigate the pollution problem, the County of Los Angeles Flood Control District is proposing to establish a fee that would generate approximately \$270 million annually, to fund a Clean Water, Clean Beaches Program. The estimated \$54 annual fee (typical single-family residential fee) would provide funding for pollution prevention, cleaning up waterways, protecting local drinking water from contamination and capturing stormwater, which could then be used to increase local drinking water supplies. All of the funds would be spent locally and generate an estimated 3,600 jobs. The measure is anticipated to be decided upon by property owners in spring of 2013. This funding would be a critical step in helping to improve beach water quality in Los Angeles County.

## **Predictive Beach Modeling**

In January 2012, Heal the Bay was awarded State Board Clean Beach Initiative (CBI) funds (through Prop 50) to collaborate with Stanford University and implement a predictive beach water quality modeling study. Heal the Bay has been anxiously anticipating this project for over four years. Through this effort, various models will be developed to forecast unhealthy water quality at various types of beaches throughout California.

The two-year project will involve designing and testing predictive models for public notification of water quality conditions. Heal the Bay and Stanford will begin by analyzing historical fecal indicator bacteria (FIB) densities and oceanic and atmospheric data to develop statistical models, and then examine the efficacy of the models as predictive water quality tools. Models validated as effective will be made available for implementation by beach managers. Ongoing input from California beach managers will improve model effectiveness and will help expedite implementation of successful models at our beaches.

Current water quality methods have an 18-24 hour lag-period, and rapid methods can even take up to six hours before a swimmer receives notification. Due to funding cuts, monitoring frequency at many beaches has been greatly reduced from daily to weekly sampling, leaving more uncertainty about beach water quality. These models will have the ability to provide critical information on chronically polluted beaches, beach pollution trends and environmental factors providing the greatest influence on bacterial concentrations. Heal the Bay envisions these models as useful tools to supplement and enhance current water quality monitoring and notification programs.

## **The Need for Consistent and Standardized Monitoring**

While some beaches have seen dramatic improvement in water quality over the years, others still have a long way to go. Vital beach water quality issues that still need to be tackled include improving coordinated monitoring between counties, guaranteeing that beaches are monitored year-round in a standardized fashion, and ensuring that chronically polluted beaches receive the necessary funding for remediation and are able to use this funding to complete projects in a timely manner. Another water quality issue brought to our attention during our Beach Report Card expansion to Oregon and Washington was the inconsistency in beach water quality criteria among states. Heal the Bay believes that water quality criteria should be uniform among states for consistency in public health protection. Heal the Bay will continue to work with health agencies to bring awareness about the discrepancy and implement the appropriate criteria.

Most public agencies monitor for fecal indicator bacteria using monitoring plans that have been developed without collaboration with other regions. Nine years ago, Heal the Bay worked with EPA to formulate a model monitoring and public notification program. This plan recommended for public agencies to monitor beaches at a certain depth and distance from a storm drain and ensure the appropriate posting of warning signs to the public. A number of these measures were incorporated into health department monitoring plans. But there are still disparities among

counties with regards to the distance at which their samples are taken from a storm drain. Some counties, such as Los Angeles, measure right in front of the storm drain, while other counties are ignoring plan recommendations by measuring at 25, 50, or even 83 yards from the storm drain. This discrepancy makes it difficult to compare results from county to county or even beach to beach, and is not adequately protective of the public health. Further efforts will be made in the coming year to unite all stakeholders in a standardized monitoring process. Heal the Bay will work to implement a standardized monitoring plan that can be applied statewide to allow more accurate comparison of beach water quality and improve public health protection.

### About the Beach Report Card

Heal the Bay’s Beach Report Card is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by dischargers and health agencies. Data is analyzed when it is made available by these entities. Grades are updated every Friday. The report is a comprehensive examination of coastal water quality throughout California, Oregon, and Washington. Exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available online at [www.healthebay.org/brc/methodology](http://www.healthebay.org/brc/methodology).

The Beach Report Card can be accessed from any computer, or mobile device at [beachreportcard.org](http://beachreportcard.org).

A free Beach Report Card app (iPhone and Android) provides A through F grades, weather conditions and user tips for more than 650 beach locations in California, Oregon and Washington at the fingertips of those who swim, surf and play at the beach. Links to the app can be found at [beachreportcard.org](http://beachreportcard.org)

**The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches. Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for three days after a rainstorm.** After a rainfall, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually *far exceed* health criteria stipulated in the state’s Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

Table 1

California’s County Summer Beach Water Quality 2012							
County	A	B	C	D	F	A-B%	C-F%
Humboldt	4	0	1	0	0	80%	20%
Mendocino	3	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Sonoma	7	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Marin	24	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Contra Costa	2	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
San Francisco	12	2	0	0	0	100%	0%
Alameda	8	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
San Mateo	20	1	1	0	1	91%	8%
Santa Cruz	10	0	1	0	2	77%	23%
Monterey	7	1	0	0	0	88%*	13%*
San Luis Obispo	20	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Santa Barbara	15	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Ventura	40	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Los Angeles	70	7	5	0	7	87%*	14%*
LA without Long Beach	63	3	3	0	7	87%	13%
Long Beach only	7	4	2	0	0	85%	15%
LA TMDL beaches	63	2	3	0	1	94%*	5%*
Orange County	95	5	1	0	1	98%	2%
San Diego	73	0	0	0	0	100%	0%

\*Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

Table 2

Santa Monica Bay Beach TMDL Exceedance Count 4/1/2012 – (Labor Day) 9/3/2012	
Exceedances	Location
99	Cabrillo Beach - harborside at restrooms
43	Redondo Municipal Pier - south side
37	Surfrider Beach daily
33	Topanga State Beach at creek mouth
33	Santa Monica Municipal Pier
33	Cabrillo Beach - harborside at boat launch
29	Malibu Pier- 50 yards east
21	Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth
13	Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach-Playground area
11	Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth
10	Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach
10	Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach
9	Redondo State Beach at Topaz St. - north of jetty
5	Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach-lifeguard tower
4	Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.
4	Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain
4	Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain
3	Puerco State Beach at creek mouth
3	Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs
3	Redondo Municipal Pier 100 yards south
2	Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon
2	Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek
2	Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain
2	Venice City Beach at Topsail St.
2	Hermosa Beach Pier- 50 yards south
1	Latigo Canyon Creek mouth
1	Malibu Point
1	Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach
1	Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club
1	Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach-btwn. Tower and Boat dock
1	Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain
1	Manhattan State Beach at 40th Street
1	Manhattan Beach at 28th St. drain
1	Manhattan Beach Pier drain
1	Herondo Street storm drain
1	Torrance Beach at Avenue I drain
1	Wilder Annex, San Pedro

*Heal the Bay is a nonprofit environmental organization making Southern California coastal waters and watersheds, including Santa Monica Bay, safe, healthy and clean. We use science, education, community action and advocacy to pursue our mission.*

Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card is made possible by the generous support of:

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