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NEWSROOM

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

E-NEWSLETTER

EVENT CALENDAR

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Increased red tide levels detected on Sarasota County beaches

Recent beach water samples collected by the Sarasota County Health Department and analyzed by Mote Marine Laboratory for the algae red tide (*Karenia brevis*) show a marked increase over test results from last week. Higher levels of *Karenia brevis* were found at southern Sarasota County beaches, with the highest increases reported from Turtle Beach southward to Blind Pass Beach which includes the Paw Park at South Brohard Beach in Venice.

Sarasota County lifeguards are reporting moderate to high respiratory irritation at various beaches. Local officials say people can still enjoy the beaches. However, those with asthma or chronic respiratory impairments need to watch beach conditions where red tide impacts are being reported. For those who are susceptible, the symptoms associated with red tide tend to become more noticeable when the winds are blowing on-shore.

“Beachgoers are encouraged to check the Mote beach report before they go to the beach as conditions can change daily,” said Tom Higginbotham, Sarasota County Health Department Environmental Health Administrator. The Mote Marine Laboratory’s Beach Conditions Report is updated twice a day and can be accessed online at www.mote.org/beaches. Residents and visitors can also register to receive email reports about specific beaches. For telephone updates, call 941-BEACHES (232-2437) and press “1” for Sarasota County beaches.

County Health officials are also advising pet owners about the risks red tide poses to animals brought to the beach. Red Tide can also affect dogs after they come out of the water, lick their paws or fur and ingest the algae which can be harmful to their health. Pets should not be allowed to consume or play with dead fish.

Beaches showing high levels of red tide include:

- Turtle Beach – Midnight Pass Road
- Nokomis Beach – 100 Casey Key Road
- North Jetty – 1000 Casey Key Road
- Venice Beach – 101 The Esplanade
- Service Club Park – 1190 Harbor Drive
- Venice Fishing Pier – 1600 Harbor Drive South
- Brohard Beach – 1600 Harbor Drive South
- Caspersen Beach – 4100 Harbor Drive
- Manasota Beach – 8570 Manasota Key Road

- Blind Pass Beach – 6725 Manasota Key Road

Beaches in central and northern Sarasota County showing low to moderate levels of red tide include:

- Longboat Key Public Beach -- Tarawitt Drive, Longboat Key
- Bird Key Park recreation area, west of Ringling Causeway
- Siesta Beach, 948 Beach Road, Siesta Key
- Lido Beach, 400 Ben Franklin Drive, Lido Key
- South Lido Beach, 190 Taft Drive and 2201 Ben Franklin Drive, Lido Key

Additional resources for beach condition information include:

- Visit Sarasota Beach report:
<http://www.visitsarasota.org/beaches/>
- Visit Sarasota information about red tide:
<http://www.visitsarasota.org/media-room/>
- For biweekly red tide monitoring reports from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission:
<http://myfwc.com/research/redtide/events/status/statewide/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/hab/default.htm>
- Florida Department of Health:
<http://www.myfloridaeh.com/medicine/aquatic/index.html>
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services:
<http://www.floridaaquaculture.com/RedTide/RedTideInfo.htm>
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA): <http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/hab/>
- Health-related information/reporting of illnesses from exposure to red tide: call toll-free 24/7 Florida Poison Control Information Center at 1-800-222-1222. People can also call the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 with health-related questions.

