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NEWSROOM

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

E-NEWSLETTER

EVENT CALENDAR

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Red tide detected on Sarasota County beaches; public advised to take precautions

Recent beach water samples collected by the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County and analyzed by Mote Marine Laboratory for the red tide algae (*Karenia brevis*) show an increase over test results from last week. Higher levels of *Karenia brevis* were found at the following Sarasota County beaches: Siesta Beach, Turtle Beach, Nokomis Beach, North Jetty, Venice Beach, Service Club Park, Venice Fishing Pier, Brohard Beach, Caspersen Beach and Manasota Beach. Lifeguards at impacted beaches post signage advising the public about the red tide and recommending that they check [Mote Marine's Beach Conditions Report](#) about red tide effects on local and other regional beaches in Southwest Florida.

Sarasota County lifeguards are reporting slight to moderate respiratory irritation caused by red tide's airborne toxins blowing ashore at various beaches. Beachgoers may experience coughing, sneezing, scratchy throat or teary eyes. These effects should be temporary and go away when those affected leave the beach. However, people with asthma, emphysema or other chronic respiratory impairments should be aware of places where red tide impacts are being reported and should avoid those areas. If persons experience symptoms – especially if they have a chronic lung condition – health officials advise that they make alternative plans away from red tide-affected areas. If symptoms persist, seek medical attention. Residents living in beach areas where red tide is present are advised to close windows and run the air conditioner (making sure that the AC filter is maintained according to manufacturer's specifications).

Prevailing southerly winds earlier this week are believed to have contributed to the resurgence of red tide in Sarasota County. It is important to note that since winds are variable, conditions can change frequently throughout the day. For those who are susceptible, the symptoms associated with red tide tend to become more noticeable when the winds are blowing onshore.

Small amounts of dead fish have been reported and are being cleaned up at Blind Pass Beach, Manasota Beach, Venice Beach and Caspersen Beach to Service Club Park. As a precaution, health officials recommend that beachgoers wear shoes when walking on the sand. This will help to prevent puncture wounds from the spines or bones of dead fish.

Most people can swim in red tide, but it can cause skin irritation and burning eyes. If your skin is easily irritated, avoid red tide water. It is advisable to get out and thoroughly wash off with fresh water. Swimming near dead fish is not recommended.

Pet owners are advised that red tide poses a risk to animals brought to the beach. Red tide can 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. Be sure to rinse dogs off with freshwater if they swim in red tide waters.

Beachgoers are encouraged to check the Mote Marine Laboratory Beach Conditions Report before they go to the beach since conditions can change daily. The report is updated twice a day and can be accessed online at www.mote.org/beaches. Click on the same link to the mobile-friendly version of the beach conditions report.

Visitors also can register to receive email reports about specific beaches. For telephone updates, call 941-BEACHES (232-2437) and press "1" for Sarasota County beaches.

For the latest red tide status reports and general information about red tide, visit the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) website at MyFWC.com/Research. The FWC-Mote Cooperative Facebook page is www.facebook.com/FLHABs.

