



Heal the Bay

**Heal the Bay's 2007
California Summer Beach Report CardSM**

Heal the Bay's 2007 California Summer Beach Report Card™ provides beachgoers with essential water quality information by grading 494 monitoring locations, from Humboldt County to San Diego County. The grades are based on dry weather water quality data provided by more than 20 different entities throughout California. The data presented in this report was collected from Memorial Day weekend (5/26/07) through Labor Day weekend (9/3/07). This report is intended to give an overview of California's beach water quality during the summer of 2007.

The Beach Report Card is based on the routine monitoring of beaches conducted by local health agencies and dischargers. Water samples are analyzed for bacteria that indicate pollution from numerous sources, including fecal waste. The better the grade a beach receives, the lower the risk of illness to ocean users. The report does not measure the amount of trash or toxins found at beaches. The Beach Report Card would not be possible without the cooperation of all of the shoreline monitoring agencies in the state.

California: Statewide water quality at California beaches this past summer was excellent. California's record drought likely contributed to the best overall summer grades in recent memory. Long Beach water quality showed moderate improvement from last year but was still by far the worst in the state. Even with Long Beach still suffering from pollution problems, statewide water quality was very good, with 92% of the beaches receiving A and B grades for the summer. This represents a nearly 10% upswing from last year, when only 83% of tested beaches received A and B grades. If Los Angeles County is removed from the analysis, 96% of the beaches received an A or B grade statewide. Santa Monica Bay monitoring locations also fared very well this summer, actually exhibiting water quality just slightly better than the statewide average, with 93% As and Bs. There were only 38 locations (8%) throughout the state that received fair-to-poor water quality grades (8 Cs, 10 Ds and 20 Fs).

San Diego County: Water quality data collected at beaches in San Diego County resulted in nearly 100% A or B grades. Of the 93 locations monitored frequently enough to be included in this report, 92 sites (99%) received either an A or B grade. The drought played a major role in the excellent water quality as few storm drains and creeks discharged to beaches. The only location with data exceeding acceptable levels frequently enough to drop the grade to a D was at Pacific Beach Point. In 2006, the City of San Diego completed a bacterial source tracking study at P.B. Point. A summary of the report can be found on page 26 of the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health's [2006 Beach Closure & Advisory Report Summary](#).

Two sewage spills this summer led to San Diego County beach closures. The first was a 20-gallon spill from a line underneath Imperial Beach Pier. The beach at the pier was closed for two days in May. Also, the beach adjacent to Lawrence and Kellogg streets in San Diego Bay was closed Aug. 28-31 due to a 600-gallon sewage spill at the USN Sub base. In addition to these sewage spills, a large cargo ship fuel spill on May 31 resulted in the closure of a 2.5-mile stretch of beaches in Encinitas. All beaches were reopened by June 4.

Orange County: Overall water quality at beaches in Orange County this past summer was very good again. Of the 104 water quality monitoring locations covered by the Beach Report Card, 98 (94%) received A or B grades. In fact, 96 (92%) of the monitored beaches in Orange County received an A grade. Usually one of the most polluted beaches in the state, Doheny Beach had excellent water quality at multiple locations for the second consecutive summer. An EPA-funded epidemiological study at Doheny was postponed for a year due to lack of flow this summer.

Only four locations received poor grades: Huntington State Beach at Magnolia St. (D), North Beach at Doheny (D), Poche Creek Beach in San Clemente (F), and one of the four monitoring locations at Baby Beach in Dana Point Harbor's West End (D). The other three monitoring locations at Baby Beach scored A's this summer.

There were five sewage spills that led to beach closures reported to Heal the Bay throughout the summer. One with a known volume of five to 50 gallons resulted in a closure in Newport Bay at Adams Street for four days. The other spills of unknown volumes each resulted in three-to-four day precautionary closures at: Huntington Harbor at Sunset Aquatic Marina and Portofino Cove, Laguna Beach at Aliso Creek, San Clemente City Beach at the Mariposa drain, and Newport Bay at the Balboa Bay Club and the Orange Coast College crew docks.

Los Angeles County: Overall, Los Angeles beach water quality grades were fair. Long Beach and Avalon beaches again exhibited extremely poor water quality. Santa Monica Bay beaches (Leo Carrillo to Cabrillo Beach) showed marked improvement from last summer. Only four of the 67 Santa Monica Bay beaches (6%) exhibited poor water quality this summer. Last summer there were 16 of 65 (25%) poor grades for Santa Monica Bay beaches.

Despite significant problems, Long Beach's water quality grades this year actually demonstrate an improvement from last summer. This summer there were 48% A and B grades in Long Beach. Last summer, this percentage was 12%. Most of the polluted beaches lay between the Los Angeles River and Belmont Pier (8 poor grades) and in the Colorado Lagoon area. The city will soon undertake a source tracking study to identify the source(s) of fecal bacteria at city beaches.

Avalon beaches on Catalina Island continue to suffer from very poor water quality. None of the 5 monitoring locations have received good grades (A or B) for the last three summers.

Overall, Santa Monica Bay beaches fared much better than last summer, with 62 (93%) of 67 monitoring locations receiving A or B grades (last year this number was 75%). The five beaches with fair-to-poor water quality were Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach in Malibu (F), Castlerock storm drain at Castle Rock Beach (C), Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal storm drain (F), Santa Monica Pier (F), Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth (F), and harborside at Cabrillo Beach at the lifeguard tower (F).

A dry weather runoff treatment facility at Puerco Canyon has been built and Heal the Bay hopes to see a dramatic improvement in water quality there soon. Temescal Beach and Castlerock both have dry weather runoff diversions, but clearly greater effort to operate and maintain these facilities is needed.

Despite the improving grades for Santa Monica Bay, a few beaches still exceed the Santa Monica Bay beaches' newly adopted bacteria standards. (Santa Monica beaches are not allowed to exceed state standards during summer dry weather.) Below is a table of Santa Monica Bay water quality exceedances between April 1 and Sept.3. The beach at Santa Monica Pier was by far the most polluted in Santa Monica Bay and was the second most polluted beach in California this summer, behind the location north of the Avalon pier.

Two days before Memorial Day weekend, a 5,000-gallon sewage spill into Ballona Creek resulted in beach closures from Topsail Street in Venice to Culver Boulevard in Playa del Rey. The beaches were reopened on Saturday, May 26. An additional five sewage spills in Los Angeles County were reported to Heal the Bay this summer. Only two of these spills warranted beach closures by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. On June 13, an estimated 2,427 gallons of sewage entered a catch basin tributary to Ballona Creek. Beaches near the Ballona Creek outlet were closed as a precaution for two days. On July 10, an estimated 10,355 gallons of sewage backed out of a sewer and entered a tributary to the Los Angeles Harbor. Cabrillo beaches were closed for five days and reopened on July 14.

SM Bay beach exceedances 4/1/07 through 9/3/2007		
Exceedances	Location	Location Description
65	SMB-3-3	Santa Monica Municipal Pier (point zero)
29	SMB-BC-1	Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth (point zero)
16	S16	Redondo Municipal Pier - 100 yards south (aka SMB-6-2)
15	SMB-1-12	Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.
11	DHS (109a)	Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach-Playground area (aka MdRH-1)
9	S1	Surfrider Beach (breach point)- daily (aka SMB-MC-2)
7	S2	Topanga State Beach at creek mouth (aka SMB-1-18)
7	SMB-3-4	Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain (point zero)
6	SMB-2-1	Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach
4	S9	Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach-lifeguard tower (aka MdRH-2)
4	DHS (109)	Venice City Beach at Topsail St. (aka SMB-2-9)
3	DHS (107)	Venice City Beach at Brooks Ave. drain (aka SMB-3-7)
3	SMB-1-10	Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach
3	SMB-3-1	Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain (point zero)
3	SMB-2-5	Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain (point zero)
2	SMB-3-6	Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain
2	SMB-3-8	Venice City Beach at Windward Ave. drain (point zero)
2	DHS (113)	Manhattan Beach at 28th St. drain (aka SMB-5-2)
2	DHS (108)	Venice Fishing Pier- 50 yards south (aka SMB-2-8)
2	LACSD7	Cabrillo Beach, oceanside (aka SMB-7-9)
2	DHS (101)	Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain) (aka SMB-2-3)
2	SMB-1-9	Latigo Canyon Creek mouth (point zero)
2	SMB-1-7	Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth (point zero)
2	DHS (002)	Malibu Pier- 50 yards east (aka SMB-MC-3)
1	DHS (003)	Malibu Point (aka SMB-MC-1)
1	DHS (109b)	Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach-btwn. Tower and Boat dock (aka MdRH-3)
1	DHS (110)	Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty) (aka SMB-2-12)
1	DHS (111)	Hyperion Treatment Plant One Mile Outfall (aka SMB-2-14)
1	DHS (112)	Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain (aka SMB-2-15)
1	SMB-5-3	Manhattan Beach Pier drain (point zero)
1	DHS (115)	Herondo Street storm drain- (in front of the drain) (aka SMB-6-1)
1	SMB-1-11	Puerco State Beach at creek mouth (point zero)
1	SMB-3-5	Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain (point zero)
1	SMB-3-2	Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain (point zero)
1	DHS (001)	Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs (aka SMB-1-15)
1	SMB-2-7	Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (point zero)
1	SMB-1-8	Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach
1	SMB-1-6	Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)
1	DHS (114)	Hermosa City Beach at 26th St. (aka SMB-5-4)

Ventura County: Overall water quality at beaches throughout Ventura County was excellent again this summer. All 54 monitoring locations received A or B grades. In fact, due to the drought drying up local rivers and creeks, there was only one B grade -- at Rincon just south of the creek, a periodically lower-scoring beach. All other locations received A grades for the summer. There were no known sewage spills in Ventura County that led to beach closures.

Santa Barbara County: Water quality at beaches in Santa Barbara County saw a marked improvement from the last summer. This year, 85% of Santa Barbara monitoring locations received an A or B grade. (Last year this percentage was 70%). Only three locations scored fair-to-poor grades this summer: Arroyo Burro Beach (C), Leadbetter Beach (D), and East Beach at Mission Creek (C). There were no known sewage spills in Santa Barbara County that led to beach closures.

San Luis Obispo County: Overall water quality at beaches in San Luis Obispo County was excellent again this past summer, with only one monitoring location receiving lower than an A or B grade. Pismo Beach Pier (F) again received the county's only poor grade. Researchers at Cal-Poly SLO are leading a comprehensive source

tracking and fate and transport study near the pier. There were no known sewage spills that led to beach closures.

Monterey County: Beach water quality in Monterey County was excellent this year. All monitoring locations received A grades. Even Stillwater Cove at the Beach and Tennis Club, last year's only F grade in the county, improved to narrowly score an A grade. No known sewage spills led to beach closures in Monterey County this summer.

Santa Cruz County: Overall water quality in Santa Cruz this past summer was very good. Of the 13 weekly sampled locations, 12 (92%) received A or B grades. The only location not to receive a good grade was Cowell Beach, which received a D grade. Last year's only beach to score a D grade, Capitola Beach west of the jetty, improved to an A this summer. There were no known sewage spills in Santa Cruz County that led to beach closures.

San Mateo County: This summer, San Mateo's overall ocean water quality was excellent. Of the 20 regularly monitored locations, 19 (95%) received A grades. Pillar Point Harbor at the end of Westpoint Avenue received the county's only B grade. There were no known sewage spills that led to beach closures in San Mateo County this summer.

Alameda County: Heal the Bay was able to obtain Alameda County recreational beach water quality monitoring data for the first time this summer. Weekly grades for five locations in Alameda County can now be found on our report card. The new locations are all at Crown Beach, and they all received A grades in their debut. Only one location, 2001 Shoreline Drive, scored lower than an A+. Heal the Bay commends the East Bay Regional Park District for making both Alameda and Contra Costa counties' data available for the Beach Report Card this year.

San Francisco County: Overall beach water quality in San Francisco County was excellent again this year. All 14 monitoring locations that were sampled regularly over the summer received A grades. Monitoring locations at Baker Beach East, China Beach, Ocean Beach, and Sunnydale Cove at Candlestick Point all earned excellent marks this past summer. The County's raw data is made available to the public on the website <http://beaches.sfwater.org>. There were no sewage spills or combined sewage overflows that resulted in beach closures this past summer.

Contra Costa County: Contra Costa County recreational water quality data is also a new addition to Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card. Three new locations at Keller Beach make their debut this year. All three locations received A grades. Heal the Bay commends the East Bay Regional Park District for making both Alameda and Contra Costa counties' data available for the Beach Report Card this year.

Marin County: Marin County data is usually included in our annual water quality report, but this is the first time that Marin County data was made available for end of summer analysis. All 25 monitoring locations received either A or B grades. Some 23 of 25 beaches (92%) received A grades.

Sonoma County: Of the seven monitoring locations that were sampled over the summer, six locations (86%) received A grades. Water quality at Campbell Cove is typically very good from May into August, but usually begins its seasonal decline in water quality in September. This year, the report card only includes data through Labor Day weekend. As a result, Campbell Cove scored a B grade for this summer. No known sewage spills during this summer were reported to Heal the Bay.

Mendocino: Mendocino makes its debut on our summer report card as well this year. Of the seven locations monitored throughout the summer, only four were tracked frequently enough to merit a grade in this report. All four of these locations received A grades. They include MacKerricher State Park at Mill Creek, Pudding Creek ocean outlet, Big River near PCH, and Van Damme State Park at the Little River.

Humboldt County: Humboldt County received substantial amounts of late seasonal rain this spring. As a result, water quality varied throughout the county's five monitoring locations. Moonstone County Park received a C grade and Clam Beach County Park received an F grade for the summer. All other Humboldt county beaches received A or B grades. Water quality at these beaches, except for Clam Beach, improved significantly over the second half of the summer. There were no known sewage spills that led to beach closures this summer.

Del Norte County: Heal the Bay was unable to obtain the data from Del Norte County in time for this analysis. There were no known sewage spills in these counties that led to beach closures.

CALIFORNIA SUMMER 2007 BEACH WATER QUALITY

Table 1						
Heal the Bay's						
2007 California End of Summer Beach Report Card						
Overall Grades by County						
County	A	B	C	D	F	Total
Humboldt	2	1	1	0	1	5
Mendocino	4	0	0	0	0	4
Sonoma	6	1	0	0	0	7
Marin	23	2	0	0	0	25
Contra Costa	3	0	0	0	0	3
San Francisco	14	0	0	0	0	14
Alameda	5	0	0	0	0	5
San Mateo	19	1	0	0	0	20
Santa Cruz	11	1	0	1	0	13
Monterey	8	0	0	0	0	8
San Luis Obispo	18	1	0	0	1	20
Santa Barbara	17	0	2	1	0	20
Ventura	53	1	0	0	0	54
Los Angeles	68	7	3	4	17	99
Orange County	96	2	2	3	1	104
San Diego	90	2	0	1	0	93
Southern California	324	12	7	9	18	370
Total	437	19	8	10	20	494

Table 2						
Heal the Bay's						
2007 California End of Summer Beach Report Card						
Grades by Percentage for each County						
County	A	B	C	D	F	Total %
Humboldt	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	100%
Mendocino	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Sonoma	85.7%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Contra Costa	92.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
San Francisco	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Alameda	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
San Mateo	95.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Santa Cruz	84.6%	7.7%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	100%
Monterey	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
San Luis Obispo	90.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	100%
Santa Barbara	85.0%	0.0%	10.0%	5.0%	0.0%	100%
Ventura	98.1%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Los Angeles	68.7%	7.1%	3.0%	4.0%	17.2%	100%
Orange County	92.3%	1.9%	1.9%	2.9%	1.0%	100%
San Diego	96.8%	2.2%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	100%
Southern California	87.6%	3.2%	1.9%	2.4%	4.9%	100%
Total	88.5%	3.8%	1.6%	2.0%	4.0%	100%

About the Beach Report Card

Heal the Bay's website, www.healthebay.org, is updated every Friday with weekly Beach Report Card grades for all sampled locations. Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by dischargers and health agencies. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available by these agencies. The report is a comprehensive examination of coastal water quality throughout California. Beaches are graded using an A-F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for three indicator bacteria. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the Heal the Bay office or online at www.healthebay.org/brc/methodology.

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 rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually *far exceed* health criteria stipulated in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

About Heal the Bay

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