



## ***News Release***

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### ***Escambia County and Escambia County Health Department jointly rescind Oil Impact Notice for Pensacola Beach and a portion of Perdido Key***

***Pensacola, Fla.*** – With water analysis from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) indicating that swimming is safe in the Gulf waters, and in consultation with Escambia county government officials regarding projected and current oil impact on the beaches, the Escambia County Health Department and Escambia County are rescinding the Oil Impact Notice for Pensacola Beach, and for the portion of Perdido Key that includes the state park, east to the entrance to the Perdido Unit, Gulf Islands National Seashore property. The Oil Impact Notice remains in effect for the rest of Perdido Key, west of the state park to the state line and all of the Gulf Island National Seashore property in both Perdido Key and Pensacola Beach.

Analysis of water samples by the Florida Department of Health (DOH) and DEP indicate that levels of oil are within safe standards. In addition, scientific analysis determined that sand that is visibly clean is also free of oil and its related chemicals.

”With the improved conditions for a portion of our beaches and this analysis, we feel that we can rescind the Oil Impact Notice for a portion of the beaches,” said health department director Dr. John Lanza. “However, we recognize that oil may still be present in the Gulf and may come into our swimming areas. Residents should still follow basic precautions about contact with oil products and avoid contact with water and sand when they see, smell or feel oil.”

Because there are no public walkovers at the portions of Perdido Key that remain under the Oil Impact Notice, there are no signs posted. Beachgoers on both beaches should follow the guidance listed below for avoiding oil product in the water or the sand.

For those visiting the beach in areas still under Oil Impact Notice:

Oil product may be present on the beach and in the water. Oil product may include: oil sheen, oil slick, oil mousse, extremely large numbers of tar balls in the water, or the water may feel oily. To avoid potential health impacts, please:

- Avoid wading, swimming, or entering the water. If oil makes contact with skin, wash it off with grease-cutting liquid dishwashing detergent.
- Avoid contact with oil and oily materials in the water or on the beach.
- Avoid contact with dead or dying fish or other aquatic and wild life.
- Young children, pregnant women, and people with compromised immune systems should avoid the area.
- If experiencing respiratory problems, leave the area and contact your physician, as you deem necessary.

The decision to rescind is based on the following information from DEP and DOH:

Conditions may change:

- Beaches may continue to be impacted by the oil product over time.
- Severe weather may change the oiling of all or a portion of any beach.
- It may be necessary to issue health advisories or other public health messaging in order to protect the health and safety of Florida residents and visitors in the future.

Beachgoers should avoid oil product:

- Because wave action and currents may periodically bring tar balls ashore or expose small areas of buried oil within the sand, beach goers may encounter weathered oil products and tar balls, and should avoid touching the product.
- If people accidentally come into contact with buried oil product or tar balls they should wash the residue from their skin as soon as practical. Brief skin contact is not a medical emergency, but can result in skin irritation if not removed.
- Avoid contact with dead or dying fish or other aquatic life.

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