



Media Release

STATE WATER BOARD APPROVES FUNDS FOR BEACH WATER QUALITY MONITORING **THE BOARD ALSO RECEIVES A FEDERAL GRANT FOR WATER TESTING**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Judie Panneton – 916 341-5261

SACRAMENTO - Today, the State Water Resources Control Board approved a resolution to allocate funding through the year 2016 for beach water quality monitoring in California. The board, which has overseen the Beach Safety Program since the beginning of this year, voted unanimously to allocate up to \$1 million dollars for Fiscal Year 2012-2013, and up to \$1.8 million annually through Fiscal Year 2015-2016 for the program to continue. The funds provide for monitoring, collecting, and analyzing ambient beach water quality samples from April 1 through October 31 for each year through 2016 to help determine swimming conditions across the state.

The Beach Safety Program funding is provided by the State Water Board to local county Health Care Agencies who perform the monitoring and public notification services. Warning signs are posted when bacterial indicators exceed state standards, which can increase a person's chance of becoming ill.

The allocation of funds is dependent upon approval of the appropriation by the Legislature. (SB 482 authorized up to \$1.8 million annually from the Waste Discharge Permit Fund, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to implement the Beach Safety Program.)

From January 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012, the State Water Board has been providing \$492,000 from its Cleanup and Abatement Account for beach water quality monitoring.

The State Water Board recently received a \$506,000 US Environmental Protection Agency grant to pay for water quality testing at California's beaches. The Beach Act grant funding will pay for the development of testing programs to reduce the risk of exposure to disease-causing microorganisms in ocean water. This funding helps support year-round monitoring at California's most popular beaches. California's economy is impacted by the health of its beaches. According to the National Ocean Economic Project, millions of beach visitors spending over \$10 billion a year when they visit beach communities.