

Cameron County Beaches #1

Austin, TX – Senator Eddie Lucio (D-Brownsville), commented recently on the quality of the beaches in Cameron. To further aid the preservation of Texas beaches, Lucio was successful at adding an amendment during the 86th Legislature to dedicate revenue to the Coastal Erosion Planning and Response Act -which provides resources to mitigate the effects of beach erosion.

Report: Cameron County has cleanest beaches in Texas*

According to a new report by Environment Texas Research and Policy Center, Cameron County beaches had the fewest days of potentially unsafe water in 2018 of all coastal counties in Texas.

The study, *Safe for Swimming?*, looked at fecal bacteria levels at a total of 167 beaches across the state. Of those, 141 beach sites had water pollution levels that put swimmers at risk of getting sick on at least one occasion in 2018.

Water quality at Cameron County beaches found potentially unsafe water on only 2% of testing days; 19 beaches had no testing days with unsafe water, while 8 Cameron County beaches, (six spots at Boca Chica State Park, Access Point # 6, and Fantasy Beach), had at least one.

“Swimming at the beach is a prime summertime joy for so many Texans,” Jen Schmerling, deputy director of Environment Texas Research and Policy Center, said.

“We must invest in water infrastructure that prevents pollution to ensure that America’s waterways are safe,” Schmerling said.

Human contact with contaminated water indicated by bacteria testing can result in gastrointestinal illness as well as respiratory disease, ear and eye infections, and skin rash. Those at highest risk of developing illnesses or infections include children, the elderly, and people with weakened immune systems.

Each year in the United States, swimmers suffer from an estimated 57 million cases of recreational waterborne illnesses according to a study published in 2018 in *Environmental Health*.

According to the report, a sampling site at Cole Park in Nueces County was “potentially safe” for 52 days, or 81% of testing days, more than any other site in the state.

State Sen. Eddie Lucio Jr., commented, “I’m excited that Cameron County’s beaches are the cleanest in Texas, and I encourage everyone who has never visited deep-south Texas to make their way down and enjoy our beautiful beaches.”

Environment Texas Research and Policy Center objectives include “investigate problems, craft solutions, and help the public make their voices heard in debates over the quality of our environment and our lives.

* Groves, Susanna. "Cameron County has cleanest beaches in Texas." *The Brownsville Herald*, 5 August 2019, https://m.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/report-cameron-county-has-cleanest-beaches-in-texas/article_1daa14dc-adc2-11e9-9960-d7371e92961a.html?mode=jqm