

# Algae bloom rears its ugly head in Lee, Collier

By Eric Staats  
Bonita Daily News

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Red tide is making an unwelcome comeback along northern Collier County beaches, according to water sampling results released Friday.

Samples collected Thursday showed red tide at low levels on Barefoot Beach and along Seagate beach, according to tests by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute in St. Petersburg.

Low is too high for Vanderbilt Beach resident Diane Ketcham.

"We can't breathe up here, the red tide is so bad," Ketcham said Friday afternoon. "It's a real problem. You can't walk the beach."

Thursday's samples showed red tide to be at normal levels, causing no effects, in waters at Vanderbilt Beach and not to be present at the Naples Pier and South Marco Beach.

Winds and currents can drive effects of a red tide far from sampling spots. People with illnesses such as asthma or emphysema should exercise caution when going to the beach this weekend, according to Friday's red tide update from Collier County.

Monitors consider red tide to be at normal levels at less than 1,000 cells per liter. The low levels at Barefoot and Seagate beaches ranged between 10,000 and 100,000 cells per liter.

Test results earlier this week showed red tide levels had decreased significantly at Collier County beaches. Samples taken Monday showed red tide was present at Barefoot Beach and not present at Clam Pass, Naples Pier, Marco Island beaches and Goodland.

Collier County plans a new round of sampling Monday, and results could be ready as early as Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday.

Red tide is the common name for a bloom of microscopic algae, called *Karenia brevis*, that release a toxin that can kill fish, make shellfish unsafe to eat and cause breathing troubles in humans.

The algae are naturally occurring, but some scientists theorize that pollution of nearshore waters is making red tide more common and longer lasting.

Lee County, as far south as Bonita Beach, has been under assault by a red tide for weeks, but the red tide's effects have been coming and going in Collier County since July 4 weekend.

Winds blowing offshore have lessened effects of the windborne toxin at the beaches, and currents have lessened the number of dead fish washing up on the beaches.

Collier County parks and recreation supervisor Murdo Smith said Friday that workers had to pick only a few dead fish off northern county beaches.

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Posted by [bsoeder](#) (anonymous) at 8:09 a.m. on July 29, 2006  
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We don't come down to the Bonita, Naples area in the summer vacation months anymore. The last two times we came, we couldn't quit hacking, and coughing, and dead stinky fish were all over the once beautiful beach's. It's really a shame that this area is plagued with this bacteria.!! Playing stupid and braindead about this disgusting dilemma will cost your area millions of dollars in tourist money, not to mention the people who live there, and have to avoid their once beautiful beach's. !!

0 of 0 people found this comment useful.

Posted by [paul\\_vincent\\_zecchino](#) (anonymous) at 9:48 a.m. on July 29, 2006 ([Suggest removal](#))

What else can one add to the above comment by bsoeder? It speaks eloquently to the point.

Some having authority to act for the good have for too long played dumb. They deny Red Tide exists and send well intentioned people on fools' errands in lieu of a solution.

Solution? Prevention. Stop releasing nutrients that bloom this neuro-toxin. Fix defective sewer plants forced upon citizens with false tales that well functioning septic systems pollute.

Newspapers share blame, smugly blating the kazoo of Political Correctness. "Evil powerboaters kill manatees" was a canard debunked in '98. An responsible study showed the best way to kill manatees is to poison rivers and let Red Tide finish the job.

Our local rag belched forth the smarmy bromide that "Red Tide is a naturally occurring phenomenon which has beneficial environmental effects."

Oh? Who considers dozens of dead manatees a 'beneficial environmental effect'? Are emergency rooms filled with people stricken with respiratory and other Red Tide related ailments a 'beneficial effect'?

If you're one of Maragaret Sanger's disciples perhaps you do. The rest of us view it as dissembling.

Paul Vincent Zecchino  
Manasota Key, Florida