

# Los Angeles beaches closed after spill

August 9 2006

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Los Angeles County health officials ordered the closing of several Santa Monica Bay beaches after Ballona Creek was contaminated by 20,000 gallons of sewage.

Two miles of beaches were closed Tuesday, including large portions of Venice Beach and Dockweiler State Beach, the Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday.

Jonathan Fielding, acting director of public health and county health officer, said the beaches will not reopen until bacteria levels subside to safety standards, which may not be until later in the week.

About 20,000 gallons of raw sewage spilled into Ballona Creek from a Culver City pump station after an equipment failure. The station processes 1.2 million gallons of sewage every day from Culver City and Los Angeles.

Fielding said people who swam at the beaches before they were closed, several hours after the spill, probably will not suffer any adverse health effects, but swimmers who spent a long time in the water south of the channel might be in danger of mild gastroenteritis or a mild skin infection.

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Citation: Los Angeles beaches closed after spill (2006, August 9) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-08-los-angeles-beaches.html>

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