

Red tide still killing dolphins off the coast of Florida

June 28 2019, by Joe Mario Pedersen, Orlando Sentinel

It's been six months since Florida was officially red tide free, but the effects of the last breakout can still be seen in an increased dolphin mortality rate, according to a report by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration.

The NOAA reported 174 dolphins have died between July 2018 and June 20, 2019, in Collier, Lee, Charlotte, Sarasota, Manatee, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties.

The NOAA declared the increased deaths an "unusual mortality event."

Researchers have confirmed through necropsy examinations that several samples tested positive for the red tide toxin, also known as dinoflagellate *karenia brevis*, indicating that the latest algae bloom around Florida's coasts is related to the "UME."

Red tide hit its stride last year during October and November when [algae blooms](#) were found in high concentrations on the west, east and panhandle coasts, causing the death of marine life and respiratory infections.

Red tide exposure has caused an "unusual mortality event" in the past, too, the NOAA said.

A [red tide](#) outbreak between 2005 and 2006 along the Southwest Florida coast killed 190 dolphins, the NOAA said.

The NOAA asks anyone who sees a dolphin showing signs of distress to call the Southeast Marine Mammal Stranding Hotline at (877) 942-5343.

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