

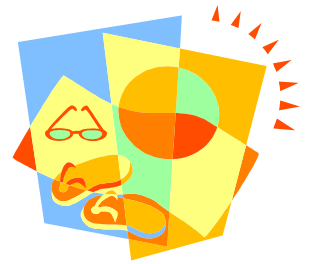


Galveston Beach Rules and Safety Tips



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Vacation Rentals



Beach Patrol Post Ike Safety Recommendations

1. Stay over 100 feet from piers and jetties. Remember there may not yet be signage in place warning of the dangers
2. Remember there may be submerged obstacles or drop-offs. Wear protective footwear when swimming and don't dive in headfirst. Be alert to sudden changes in water depth in unusual areas.
3. Check the Galveston County Health District's website to monitor daily water quality and related advisories.
4. When surfing, remember to be cautious of submerged obstacles, particularly near the rock jetties.
5. For Inquiries contact the Beach Patrol at (409) 763-4769.

Beach and Ocean Safety Tips

The ocean is a wonderful playground. Avoid its dangers by understanding its ways and being strong enough to enjoy it safely.

1. **Avoid Rip Currents** - stay away from rock jetties and piers
2. **Swim Near A Lifeguard**
3. **Never Swim Alone**
4. **Do Not Dive in Headfirst**
5. **Obey Warning Signs and Flags**
6. **Take Sun and Heat Precautions** – protective clothes, non-alcoholic fluids, hats, and sunglasses.

Public West End Beaches

- Alcohol permitted.
- Free public beaches stretching from the west end of the Seawall to San Luis Pass, these isolated beaches have no amenities.
- There are no lifeguards in these areas. Periodic lifeguard and security mobile patrol from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.
- Public access is generally at the road mile markers and are designated by signs. Most of these areas allow vehicle access directly to waters edge.
- Surfing and fishing permitted year round.
- Designated launch sites at public access areas.
- Swimming and wading are not allowed at San Luis Pass.



Recognize the Flags

Green	Indicates conditions are calm and swim with care.
Yellow	Indicates caution should be used when entering any body of water. This flag is flown for normal conditions to remind swimmers to stay alert.
Red	Flown when conditions are determined to be out of the ordinary, such as presence of strong wind, strong current or large surf. Adult swimmers should stay in water no more than waist deep and non-swimmers and children should be kept along the surf line.
Blue	Indicates a potential problem with jellyfish, Portuguese man-o-war, stingrays or other marine life that could be a hazard for swimmers. Blue flags can be used in combination with other flags.
Orange	Indicates an environmental warning for air and/or water quality. Notices posted at flag sites.

Seaweed Facts

- The Galveston Park Board cleans seaweed as per State General Land Office regulations & laws.
- The Park Board, by State law, is not allowed to remove sand or seaweed from the beach, only to move it to the dune areas, and only when a City permit has been issued.
- Nesting turtles are not to be endangered in any way and its turtle-nesting season all throughout the summer. If you see a nesting turtle or an injured turtle, please call **1-866-TURTLE-5**
- The Park Board will relocate the seaweed to the foot of the dunes and leave a small line of it at the shore
- The Park Board cleans seaweed as resources – man power and equipment – and tides allow. If the tide is high, equipment is not taken on the beaches.
- Trash, debris and glass can be embedded in seaweed; please be careful when walking in and around it.
- Often, as soon as it is cleaned, a fresh crop washes up on shore. This is simply Mother Nature at work.
- The Park Board cleans seaweed for the West End subdivisions that have requested it be done. Not all subdivisions request it.

Stings, Bites, and Cuts

Stinging jellyfish abound the Gulf waters and randomly sting whatever they touch. The most dangerous stinging jelly is the Portuguese man-o-war, a community of animals called zooids. This most obvious zooid is a purple float with its tentacles dangling in the water. **Lifting the tentacle from the skin and dousing the area with vinegar brings relief.** A paste of meat tenderizer and vinegar applied to the stings will counteract the toxin. **Do not rub the area with sand** – this will only ensure that all the stinging cells fire. And remember just because the man-o-war or jellyfish is washed up on the beach does not mean that you are safe. The tentacles can still sting. Avoid stomping them or smacking them with a stick.

Stingrays frequent shallow Gulf waters and can thrust a sharp shaft into an offending foot or ankle when stepped on. This shaft, located at the base of the stingray's tail must be handled carefully, usually surgically, because the spines point backward and prevent easy removal. One good preventive action is **to shuffle your feet while wading**. When disturbed, the stingray will move away.

Swimmers, particularly children are advised to **wear some type of footwear** when in the Gulf or on the beach. Broken glass and sharp shell remnants are everywhere, and children often fail to watch where they are going. Remember there is a high concentration of bacteria on objects in the water and near the beach. **Clean even minor wounds well** and monitor for signs of infection.

Sand Bars, Troughs, and Holes

Hidden deep spots in the surf are hazardous - especially for small children. Waves are powerful and dig holes in the bottom near shore that may be several yards wide. They can form at any water depth, so you may step into one while wading in very shallow water.

When you visit the beach, you may see swimmers standing in waist-deep water far offshore. What you don't see is how deep the water is between the beach and the sand bar area they are on. The natural processes of the Gulf create a series of bars and troughs in the near shore areas of coastal Texas. The height of the bar and the depth of the trough vary, but the water in the trough is sometimes "over your head". Unless you swim very well, **do not try to reach the sand bar offshore.**