

March 30, 2018

Dear Venice Property Owner/Manager,

Sea turtle nesting season is upon us! Mote Marine Laboratory's Sea Turtle Conservation and Research Program staff, interns, and volunteers will begin walking the Sarasota County shoreline early each morning starting April 15th in order to ensure the documentation of any sea turtle nesting activity that might take place prior to May 1st. The official sea turtle nesting season will begin on May 1st and continue through October 31st.

During nesting season, the recently updated City of Venice Ordinance 2010-10, Chapter 106 Marine Turtle Protection helps to protect threatened and endangered sea turtles by regulating coastal lighting, including privately and publicly owned lights. Lights visible from the beach remain a major threat to nesting females and emerging hatchlings. Artificial lighting can deter females from nesting and can prevent hatchlings and adult turtles from finding their way to the water. Any light should be considered harmful if it can be seen from the beach, including automobile lights, street lights, parking lot lights, security lights, interior lights, balcony lights, etc.

Please refer to the following Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission website for further information on marine turtles and lighting.

<http://myfwc.com/conservation/you-observe/lighting/>

You can also find an educational video regarding sea turtles and lighting at the following link.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OiCvME7rgGc>

Additional hazards to nesting turtles include beach furniture, umbrellas, cabanas, trenches and other temporary man-made structures on the beach. These items can entrap turtles or hatchlings and block their access to the water. City of Venice Ordinance 2010-10, Chapter 106 Marine Turtle Protection requires that all temporary structures be removed from the beach nightly or stored in areas situated to minimize interference with marine turtles.

Official lighting inspections conducted by Venice Code Enforcement will begin on May 1st. If you would like a lighting inspection prior to May 1st or if you have any questions regarding lighting or hazards to turtle nesting, please contact George Nixon, of Venice Code Enforcement, at (941) 882-7436 or Debbie Sanacore, of Venice Code Enforcement at (941) 882-7437.

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MOTE AQUACULTURE PARK

874 W.R. Mote Way
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MOTE LIVING REEF EXHIBIT AT THE NOAA ECO-DISCOVERY CENTER

35 East Quay Road
Key West, FL 33040
(305) 296-2325

TROPICAL RESEARCH LABORATORY

24244 Overseas Highway
Summerland Key, FL 33042
(305) 745-3554

A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO ADVANCING THE SCIENCE OF THE SEA AND A MEMBER OF:

American Academy of Underwater Sciences • Arts & Cultural Alliance of Sarasota • Association of Zoos & Aquariums • Association of Marine Laboratories of the Caribbean • Consortium for Ocean Leadership • Economic Development Council of Sarasota County • Florida Institute of Oceanography • Florida Ocean Alliance • Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce • Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System • International Association of Aquatic & Marine Science Libraries & Information Centers • International Consortium for Marine Conservation • National Association of Marine Laboratories Science & Environment Council of Sarasota County • Sea Grant • Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association • Southern Association of Marine Laboratories

How can you help protect sea turtles?

- ❖ Turn off, shield, or modify outside lighting to ensure that it is not visible from the beach.
- ❖ Close drapes and move interior lamps back from the windows.
- ❖ Do not use flashlights, flash photography, fishing lamps, or other transient lighting on the beach after dark.
- ❖ Remove beach furniture and other equipment or toys from the beach each night or store them in a place far back from the shoreline.
- ❖ Remember - campfires and motor vehicles are not permitted on the beach.
- ❖ Pitch in and pick up garbage found on the beach.
- ❖ Fill in any large holes dug by beachgoers
- ❖ Do not disturb a nesting sea turtle or emerging hatchlings. If hatchlings are found traveling away from the Gulf of Mexico, notify:

Mote Marine Laboratory's Sea Turtle Program at 941-388-4331.

- ❖ If you observe an injured or dead sea turtle on the beach, please call:

**Mote Marine Laboratory's Stranding Investigations Pager at 941-988-0212, or
Florida Fish & Wildlife Law Enforcement at 888-404-3922.**

Mote Marine Laboratory (www.mote.org/seaturtles) is dedicated to ensuring a safe habitat for nesting turtles and emerging hatchlings. To promote public awareness, we are providing a variety of educational materials along with this letter. We will be happy to supply you with as much additional information and materials as you need.

Thank you for your support of sea turtle conservation! Please call Mote Marine Laboratory's Sea Turtle Conservation and Research Program at (941) 388-4331 if you have any questions concerning the sea turtle nesting season or if you would like additional educational materials. With the cooperation of the visitors and residents of Venice we can help keep our beaches beautiful and provide a safe habitat for nesting sea turtles and their hatchlings.

Sincerely,



James Powell
Program Manager

Mote Marine Laboratory Sea Turtle Conservation and Research Program



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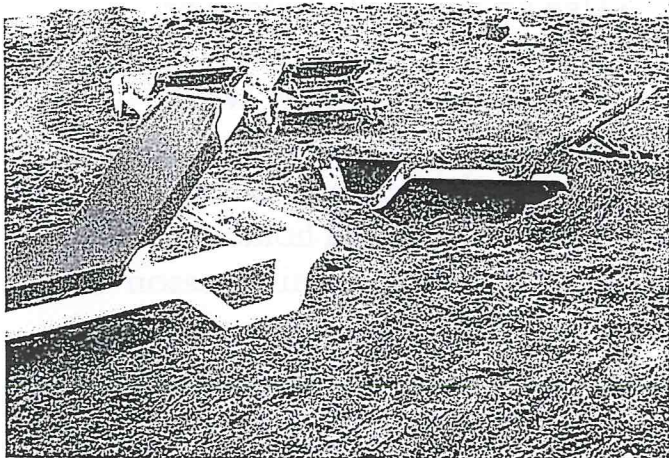
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The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Marine Turtle Protection Program has two components:

The FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) coordinates collection of nesting and stranding data, facilitates rescue and rehabilitation, and conducts research on sea turtle behavior, migrations, ecology and threats. For more information, please call (727) 896-8626 or visit the FWRI Web site at <http://research.myfwc.com/>

The FWC Imperiled Species Management Section (ISM) coordinates the Commission's management activities to ensure protection of sea turtles. The activities include reviewing and conditioning construction permits to minimize impacts to sea turtles and reviewing and permitting research, rescue and nesting surveys for sea turtles. Section staff also coordinates efforts between local government or non-profit organizations and citizens for marine turtle protection. Contact staff at (850) 922-4330 or visit the ISM sea turtle Web site at MyFWC.com.

Photo Barbara B. James



Common obstacles sea turtles encounter when attempting to nest on Florida's beaches.

Sea turtle protection

The federal Endangered Species Act lists all five species of sea turtles in Florida as either threatened or endangered. In addition, sea turtles are protected by Florida Statute 370.12, the Marine Turtle Protection Act. Anyone found harassing a sea turtle or interfering with the nesting process faces criminal and civil penalties.

Call the FWC Wildlife Alert number 1-888-404-FWCC to report:

- Stranded hatchlings
- Harassment of sea turtles
- Disturbance of nests
- Dead or injured sea turtles or hatchlings
- Entangled sea turtles
- Sea turtles caught with fishing gear

Purchase a specialty "Helping Sea Turtles Survive" license plate from your tax collector's office when you register your vehicle or vessel. Proceeds directly benefit sea turtle research and conservation. License plates also are available online at buyaplate.com



I'm helping sea turtles survive.



helpingseaturtles.org



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com
 Habitat and Species Conservation
 Imperiled Species Management Section
 620 S. Meridian Street, 6-A
 Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1600

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Florida sea turtles

Share the beach



Photo Barbara B. James

Beach Furniture and Sea Turtles



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
MyFWC.com

To Reduce Impacts To Sea Turtles From Beach Furniture:

- **Remove furniture from the beach nightly**

At night, furniture should be completely removed from the beach and stored behind the primary dune. Please remember, **heavy equipment is not allowed on the beach during nesting season.** When possible, all furniture should be moved by hand.

- **Stack and arrange furniture**

Marine turtles prefer to nest on the mid to upper beach, protecting their nest from the high tide. Furniture that is left on the beach at night can prevent nesting turtles from reaching the upper beach (See Figure 1). If furniture can not be removed at night, it should be stacked to minimize interference with nesting or hatchling sea turtles (See Figure 2).

Arrange the stacked furniture with the shortest edge facing the shoreline.

Figure 1

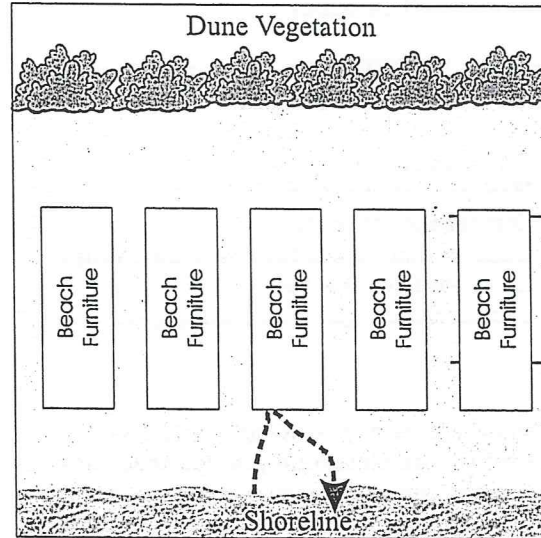
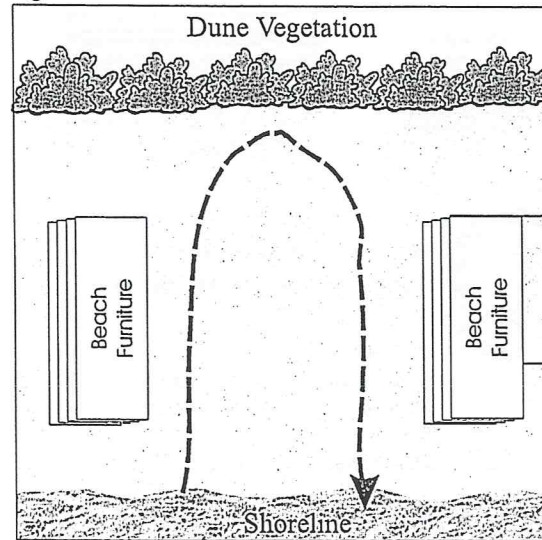


Figure 2



- **Place furniture properly**

No furniture should be placed on the beach until a nesting survey has been completed by a Marine Turtle Permit Holder, who will identify and mark nests. Place furniture at least 5 feet from any marked nest.

Furniture should not be placed on salt-resistant vegetation or on the dunes.

- **Use an umbrella holder or sleeve**

To the degree possible, avoid burying umbrella poles during sea turtle nesting season. Either anchor an umbrella holder or sleeve before the nesting season to use throughout the summer, or use umbrellas that clamp directly to the furniture.

If you see someone disturbing a sea turtle nest or see a dead, injured or harassed sea turtle, please call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 1-888-404-FWCC.