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Red tide threat has Tampa Bay on edge



Ben Montgomery

Tue, June 15, 2021, 6:20 AM · 2 min read

A growing bloom of the red tide organism *Karenia brevis* is spreading around Tampa Bay and other parts of Southwest Florida, prompting Pinellas County health officials to [issue a warning](#) to beachgoers late last week.

Why it matters: Beach businesses still recovering from the pandemic worry that a serious red tide could keep visitors away from a region that depends on tourism — and the bloom could spell disaster for the area’s marine ecosystems.

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By the numbers: According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the red tide organism [was detected](#) in 71 water samples last week, with bloom concentrations observed in 17 samples.

- Bloom concentrations were found in six samples from Pinellas County, four samples from Hillsborough County and five samples from Manatee County. ([Map](#))

What they're saying: "It ranks up there with the 2018 red tide in terms of how bad it is for the health of the bay," David Tomasko, executive director of the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, [told the Bradenton Herald](#). "The last thing in the world we needed was this."

- Scores of fish kills [have been reported](#) to the FWC since June 1.
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater has promised to keep locals and visitors informed about conditions along the 35 miles of Pinellas County beaches [here](#).

Some useful advice, straight from the Pinellas County Health Department:

- If you live near the bay or beaches, close windows and run the air conditioning.
- If outdoors, consider wearing a filter mask, especially if onshore winds are blowing.
- Don't swim around dead fish.
- Keep pets away from the water, sea foam and dead fish.
- Do not harvest or eat molluscan shellfish or distressed or dead fish. Rinse healthy fish fillets

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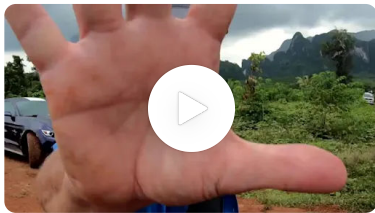


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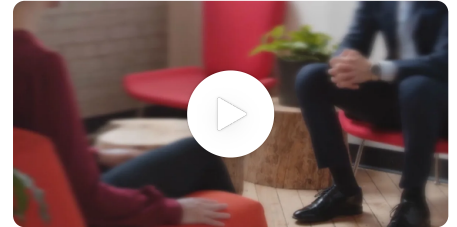
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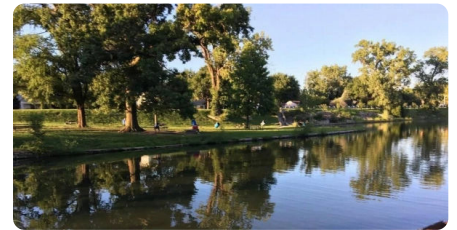
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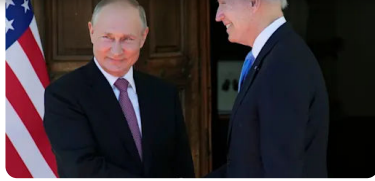


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No turnovers from Panthers' Sam Darnold on Day 2 of minicamp.

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Ball learned he won Rookie of the Year on Wednesday when teammate Miles Bridges surprised him with the award.

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"He killed my baby. You know he killed my baby," a woman was heard shouting.

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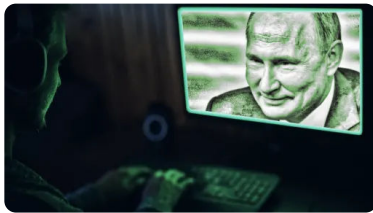
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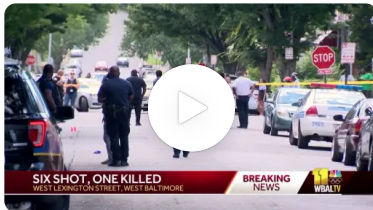
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