

88°

WEATHER ALERTS / RIP CURRENT STATEMENT: COASTAL HILLSBOROUGH, COASTAL MANATEE, COASTAL SARASOTA, PINELLAS



LATEST INFO / CALL, HELP NOW BY DONATING TO HURRICANE IDA RELIEF

RED TIDE

Sarasota County now cleaning up marine debris from red tide, locals wish it started sooner



Photo: WFLA

by: [Allyson Henning](#)

Posted: Aug 5, 2021 / 08:30 PM EDT / Updated: Aug 6, 2021 / 04:55 AM EDT

SUBSCRIBE NOW
Daily News

SIGN UP

decided to launch clean-up operations geared at red tide-related debris.

Some locals and visitors have been asking – why the delay?

Sarasota County has a [beach clean-up policy](#) that was adopted by the commission back in 2013. County officials say the policy is meant to provide direction for managing the removal of seaweed, dead fish, and other marine debris left behind from storms and tidal changes.

The policy allows Sarasota County to collect/remove marine debris manually or mechanically if it spans more than two miles of public beach and is not naturally removed by two tidal cycles.

The county has been monitoring red tide conditions daily. The decision to launch the clean-up operation came this week. County staff also confirmed Wednesday that their permits do allow them to do beach cleaning at all county beaches.

Sarasota County's clean-up response is far different from what we are seeing in neighboring Manatee County where a more proactive approach is taking place. Manatee County has cleaned about 19 tons of marine debris from the gulf, bay, and shoreline so far. Crews are raking the beach clear of debris daily from 7 a.m. to about 1 p.m.. Shrimp boat captains are also helping by clearing marine debris from the water before it reaches the popular beaches on Anna Maria Island.

Dr. Dave Tomasko explains every little bit makes a difference. Decaying fish produce nitrogen, which can fuel algae blooms like red tide.

He shared this example with us:

“10 tons of fish would probably contain about 140 pounds of nitrogen. One pound of nitrogen can produce about 300 pounds of algae of different types,” said Dr. Tomasko. “So, 300×140, that is an awful lot of algae that could perhaps be kept out of the system,” he continued.

Cleaning it up doesn't hurt at all. Honestly, if you have been out to a beach where there is red tide, it is kind of irritating, but when there is red tide and dead fish, it is more than irritating, it is really kind of gross. When you see a beach that is like strewn with maggots, people aren't gonna come back there if they see that," said Dr. Tomasko with Sarasota Bay Estuary Program.

8 On Your Side spoke with several tourists visiting Lido Key Thursday.

"We tried to walk down the beach and pick up seashells and it is just a dead fish everywhere. Really it is kind of sad," said visitor Michael Bender. "I don't think I would roll the dice and risk coming back and having the same scenario play out again," he continued.

"It kind of makes you not want to go on the beach anymore. It smells gross," said another visitor from Orlando.

Dr. Tomasko thinks it might be time for county leaders to take another look at their 2013 policy.

"I think it does make a lot of sense to not have the public expect to see a 'Disney World' type of beach where everything looks like it was engineered. That is not a normal Florida beach, but this isn't a normal Florida beach either," said Dr. Tomasko. "So I kind of think maybe what they've got is a policy that reflected an earlier time before we had the 2018 and now the 2021 red tide and I think it would make sense to revisit it. It had good intentions, I think it was probably really useful at the time, but everything we are doing that we can do to reduce it is good," he continued.

8 On Your Side contacted the entire board of county commissioners Thursday asking if they're considering making changes to the beach clean up policy. We haven't received a response back to that message.

However, the commissioner who represents Lido Key and part of Siesta Key told 8 On Your Side over the phone Thursday, he plans on bringing up the topic of red tide

SHARE THIS STORY

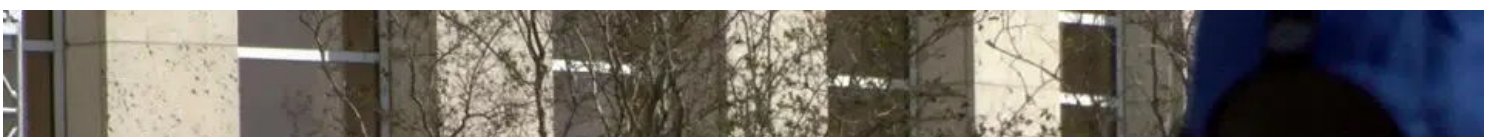
MORE STORIES



Mother with COVID-19 loses baby at 36 weeks, urges vaccination

by Karyssa D'Agostino, WRBL, Nexstar Media Wire / Sep 3, 2021

[Read the Full Article](#) →





Gasparilla Music Festival to require negative COVID-19 test or vaccination proof

by WFLA 8 On Your Side Staff / Sep 3, 2021

[Read the Full Article →](#)



Do you have the winning ticket? FANTASY 5 lotto ticket worth \$89K set to expire

by WFLA 8 On Your Side Staff / Sep 3, 2021

[Read the Full Article](#) →

TOP STORIES



Cougar that was kept as illegal pet removed from NYC home



Labor Day food and drink specials: These shops and restaurants are offering deals



Universal's Halloween Horror Nights open for screams, celebrates 30 years of 'fear'



911 dispatcher wanted for hanging up on emergency callers





WATCH: Visually impaired Paralympic athlete gets engaged to guide runner after finishing race



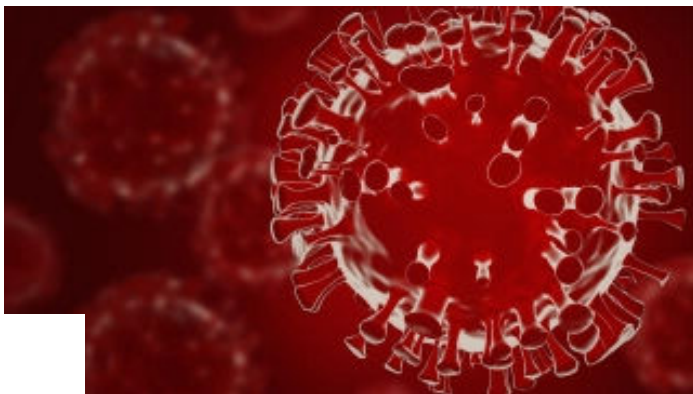
World's biggest Cuban sandwich, adventures to Shell Key & power boats in Tampa Bay this Labor Day weekend



Ex-prosecutor indicted for misconduct in Ahmaud Arbery death



After Ida soaks Northeast US, cleanup and mourning continues



Has the delta variant peaked? COVID-19 data gives glimmer of hope



'It just seems so unfair': Mother loses 2 of her children to COVID within a month



Biden calls for 'fairness' in economy after disappointing August jobs report



Connecticut state trooper dies after cruiser swept away in floodwaters

MORE STORIES



Man with over 50 outstanding warrants arrested after driving into 2 homes



Former officer who appeared on 'Live PD' trades in gun, badge for OnlyFans account



Police lieutenant accused of shoving flashlight between teen suspect's buttocks



New Zealand police kill 'terrorist' after he stabs 6 people

[Read more stories](#) →

SUBSCRIBE NOW
Breaking News

Your email




SIGN UP

FRI

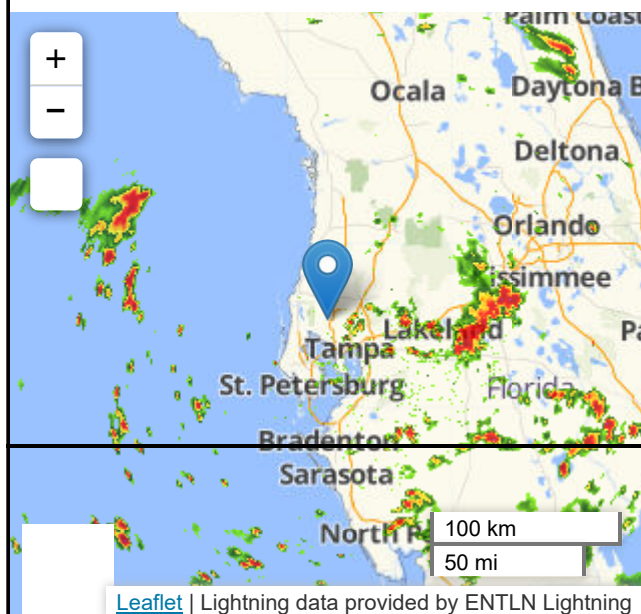
SAT

SUN

88°

 75° 60% Showers and Thunderstorms	 75° 40% Showers and Thunderstorms	 76° 30% Mostly Clear
---	---	---

City or Zip...



Leaflet | Lightning data provided by ENTLN Lightning

Fri Sep 3, 2021
2:28 PM

MAX DEFENDER 8 RADAR

TRENDING STORIES

- 1 **Tracking the Tropics: Larry forecast to become major hurricane this weekend**
- 2 **Tampa veteran left in 'rage' claims he was duped after finding dream home infested with termites**
- 3 **Son shares warning for immunocompromised after fully-vaccinated Tampa Bay dad dies from COVID-19**

5 Tampa veteran enraged over alleged fraud tied to dream home that became a nightmare infested with termites

6 Police lieutenant accused of shoving flashlight between teen suspect's buttocks

7 Staffing situation 'beyond critical' at Nature Coast EMS after 10 paramedics, EMTs resign in 1 week

8 Al Capone's former South Florida home slated for demolition



NEWS APP



WEATHER APP



DON'T MISS





News Channel 8 presents Clear The Shelters adopt & donate campaign

[Clear the Shelters](#) / 2 weeks ago

World's biggest Cuban sandwich, adventures to Shell Key & power boats in Tampa Bay this Labor Day weekend

[Local News](#) / 4 hours ago

Man cuts shark loose from rope while scalloping in Gulf

[Florida](#) / 1 day ago

'Chapel on the Bay' turned floating condo sells for \$400k on Manatee River

[Manatee County](#) / 1 day ago

8's Army telethon: Donate to Hurricane Ida relief Friday

[8 On Your Side](#) / 7 hours ago

[More Don't Miss](#) →

88°

FOLLOW US



NEWS APP



WEATHER APP



NewsNation Now

[WFLA FCC Public File](#) / [WFLA EEO Report](#) / [WTTA FCC Public File](#) / [WTTA EEO Report](#) / [WFLA Children's TV Report](#) / [Closed Captioning](#) / [Advertise With Us](#) / [WFLA Public File Assistance Contact](#) / [WTTA Children's TV Report](#) / [Privacy Policy](#) / [Terms Of Use](#) / [Covers](#) / [Best Reviews](#) / [Do Not Sell My Personal Information](#) / [FCC Applications](#) / [Public File Assistance Contact](#) /

