

**BEACH CLEANING PERMIT CONDITIONS FOR MARINE TURTLE PROTECTION
BeachKeeper in Palm Beach County, 2026**

The following conditions are required for the protection of marine turtles during the marine turtle nesting season. The nesting season is **March 1 - October 31** in Brevard, Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, and Broward counties, and is May 1 – October 31 in all other coastal counties in Florida.

1. During the marine turtle nesting season (March 1 to October 31), mechanical beach cleaning activities shall be confined to **daylight hours** (sunrise to sunset) following completion of the marine turtle nesting survey required below and **shall be limited to the average daily high tide mark line or debris line and areas seaward thereof**. Beach cleaners should enter the beach and commence beach cleaning no sooner than 10 minutes after being notified of the completion of the marine turtle nesting survey.
2. Beach cleaning equipment shall use beach accesses nearest to the areas that are authorized for cleaning under this permit.
3. During marine turtle nesting season (March 1 to October 31), the permittee is responsible for ensuring that a daily marine turtle nest survey, protection, and monitoring program is conducted throughout the permitted beach cleaning area. Such surveys and associated conservation measures shall be completed after sunrise and prior to the commencement of any mechanical beach cleaning. The marine turtle survey, protection, and monitoring program shall be conducted only by individuals possessing appropriate expertise in the protocol being followed and a valid F.A.C. Rule 68E-1 Permit issued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). To identify those individuals available to conduct marine turtle nesting surveys within the permitted area, please contact the FWC's Imperiled Species Management Section at MTP@MyFWC.com.
4. In the event that mechanical beach cleaning occurs prior to completion of the marine turtle nest survey, protection, and monitoring program, mechanical beach cleaning **shall not occur on that section of the beach until 65 days have passed or after November 30, whichever is earlier**. The permittee shall re-initiate beach cleaning only from the direction of the DEP Field Inspector and shall contact the Marine Turtle Permit Holder once authorized to reinitiate mechanical beach cleaning in that area.
5. From March 1 through August 23, all nests left in situ within ten (10) feet of the normal high tide line and beach access sites shall be marked with a circle of tape or string having a radius of at least three (3) feet, centered at the approximated location of the clutch. An additional marker shall be placed at the base of the dune or seawall to ensure that future location of the nests will be possible should the on-beach markings be lost. No mechanical cleaning equipment is allowed inside of this circle; however, careful removal of material by hand only is allowed. All equipment operators should be briefed on the types of marking utilized and should be able to easily contact the individual responsible for the nest survey to verify any questionable areas.

6. To continue or initiate beach cleaning landward of the daily tideline after November 1, the permittee is responsible for ensuring that daily nesting surveys are initiated or ongoing no later than August 23 in accordance with the following conditions:
 - a. A daily marine turtle nest survey, protection, and monitoring program must be conducted throughout the permitted beach cleaning area through October 31. The marine turtle survey, protection, and monitoring program shall be conducted only by individuals possessing appropriate expertise in the protocol being followed and a valid F.A.C. Rule 68E-1 Permit issued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).
 - b. For beach cleaning to occur landward of the average high tide mark line or debris line after October 31, all nests deposited on the beach including landward of the average daily high tideline **shall be marked with a circle of tape or string having a radius of at least three (3) feet, centered at the approximated location of the clutch starting on August 23.** An additional marker shall be placed at the base of the dune or seawall to ensure the future location of the nests will be possible should the on-beach markings be lost. No mechanical cleaning equipment is allowed inside of this circle.
7. In the event that on-beach nest markers are lost for any reason, including vandalism or high water conditions, no mechanical beach cleaning shall be conducted until the marine turtle permit holder identifies the nest and restores the markers. In the event that the nest cannot be found and may have been lost during high water conditions, the permittee shall contact FWC staff at (850) 922-4330 to determine if mechanical beach cleaning can resume. All marine turtle protection conditions shall remain in effect unless specifically waived in writing by FWC.
8. To avoid adverse impacts in the event that cleaning accidentally occurs over a nest, mechanical beach cleaning equipment shall not penetrate more than two inches into the surface of the beach. This permit authorizes the use of a vehicle with a maximum ground pressure of 10 p.s.i. and a rake or cleaning apparatus that limits penetration into the surface of the beach to a maximum of two inches. **Box blades and front or rear mounted blades are not authorized.** No other types of vehicles may be operated on the beach pursuant to this permit. Mechanized beach cleaning shall be accomplished so that no ruts greater than two inches are formed on the beach.
9. In the event that ruts greater than two (2) inches are documented from the beach cleaning equipment, mechanical beach cleaning shall not occur on the beach until the beach cleaning equipment has been modified to prevent ruts greater than two (2) inches.
10. If a marine turtle nest is exposed, or a dead, injured, or sick marine turtle is discovered, the Permittee shall ensure that the Marine Turtle Permit Holder be notified immediately such that appropriate conservation measures can be taken. Within 24 hours of any such occurrence, a report of the incident (e.g., date, time, permit number, location, photos, contact information, incident and response descriptions) shall be sent to the FWC at

MarineTurtle@MyFWC.com.

11. Burial or storage of any debris (biotic or abiotic) collected is prohibited seaward of any frontal dune, vegetation line, or armoring structure except as authorized in this permit. Removal of accumulated debris from the beach must occur immediately after cleaning has been performed.
12. If a large seaweed accumulation on the beach occurs and removal is desired, please contact the Department of Environmental Protection (CCCL@dep.state.fl.us) and the FWC (MarineTurtle@MyFWC.com).
13. Operators of mechanical beach cleaning equipment shall avoid all native, salt tolerant dune vegetation by a minimum of 10 feet.