



June 5, 2019

## Female Sea Turtle Gives Madeira Beach A Show

MADEIRA BEACH, FL – Residents and visitors walking on Madeira Beach early this morning got a surprise show from a large female sea turtle that came ashore to lay her eggs. Around 7 a.m. the sea turtle was spotted moving slowly back to the water after laying anywhere from 50-100 eggs deep in the sand and then burying them.

The nest has been marked and cordoned off to keep people away as the eggs incubate for up to 90 days before hatching. Pinellas County Sheriff's Deputies, along with volunteers from Sand to Sea and the Clearwater Aquarium patrol the beach every morning before sunrise looking for signs of new nests. So far, they have identified 17 sea turtle nests on Madeira Beach for the season which started May 1st.



The Madeira Beach Commission recently approved on first reading an update to the city's sea turtle protection ordinance. The current ordinance (Sec. 110-506) requires lighting restrictions beginning at 10 p.m. The revised ordinance mandates the lighting restriction start at sunset and end at sunrise. Other tips to help protect sea turtles include:

- Knock down sand castles, fill in holes, and remove beach furniture, so hatchlings don't get stuck in them.
- Don't leave food or wrappers on the beach, which can attract animals that will dig up a nest.
- Don't interfere with the nesting or hatching process. It is illegal to touch sea turtles under both federal and state laws.
- If you spot an unmarked nest or someone disturbing a nest call Clearwater Marine Aquarium 727-441-1790 Ext. 1 or Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission – 888-404-3922

For more information, contact Curt Preisser, City of Madeira Beach Public Information Specialist at 727-391-9951 x299 or [cpreisser@madeirabeachfl.gov](mailto:cpreisser@madeirabeachfl.gov).

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