

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact the Lee County Division of Environmental Sciences at 239-533-8353 with Sea Turtle Conservation Code or light shielding questions and to report lighting violations. Visit our website at <http://www.lee-county.com/dcd/environmental/seaturtles.htm>

On Fort Myers Beach and Bonita Beach please contact Turtle Time, Inc. at (239) 481-5566 to report dead or injured sea turtles and disoriented hatchlings. Turtle Time, Inc. is a Lee County based not-for-profit research organization dedicated to the continued survival of sea turtles. Visit their website at <http://www.turtletime.org>

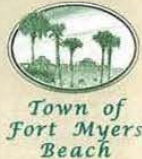
On Sanibel and Captiva Islands please contact the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation at (239) 472-2329. Visit their website at <http://www.sccf.org/turtle.htm>

On Boca Grande please contact the Gasparilla Island Sea Turtle Patrol at (941) 964-5642

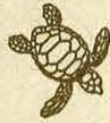
Some visitors are not aware of our lighting restrictions. Please help to keep everyone informed and make our beaches sea turtle friendly!

Cover Art is a mural - an Eagle Scout Leadership Service project by Kevin L. Green for Turtle Time Inc. Mural is located at 2301 Estero Blvd., Fort Myers Beach.

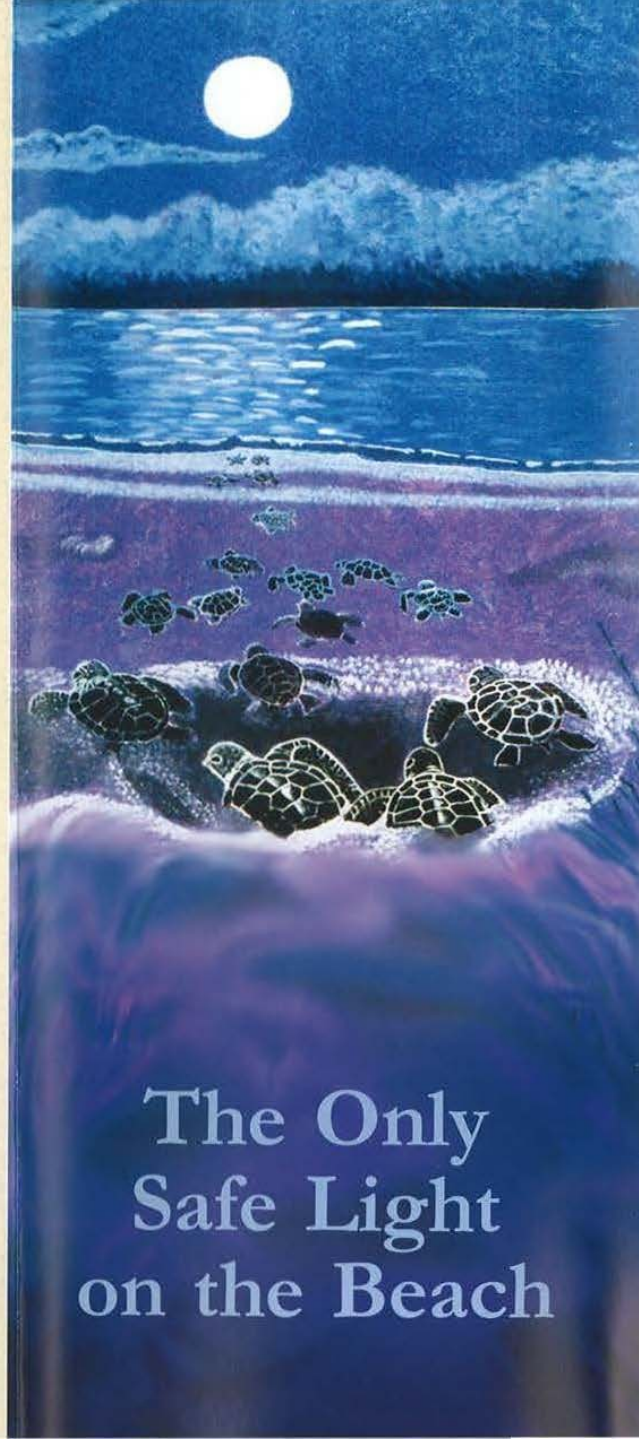
Funding for this brochure was provided in the interest of sea turtle conservation by:



Brochure Paper Includes Recycled Materials



Lee County Division of Environmental Sciences
P.O. Box 398
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The Only
Safe Light
on the Beach

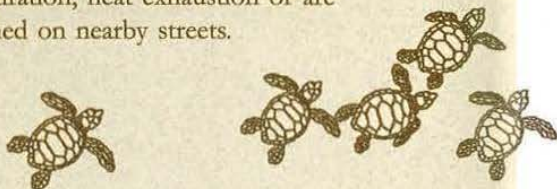


Photo courtesy of Turtle Time, Inc.

Sea turtles spend most of their lives at sea, but each year beginning in May the females crawl ashore in the darkness of night on local beaches to dig a nest and lay their eggs. Also at night, several weeks later, the hatchlings burst from their nest and immediately scramble toward the water. Moving quickly from nest to sea is critical for their survival.

THE ISSUE OF LIGHTS

On a natural beach, the lighter seaward horizon guides the hatchlings to the water. Artificial lights, however, confuse the hatchlings and they wander inland. Lost and disoriented, they soon die from dehydration, heat exhaustion or are crushed on nearby streets.



In an effort to help this threatened species survive, all local coastal governments have adopted and enforce Sea Turtle Conservation Codes. Compliance with these regulations has resulted in thousands of successful sea turtle hatchlings safely reaching our Gulf waters. Lee County alone contains over 40 miles of beach habitat suitable for sea turtle nesting.

Sea turtles are also protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA) as well as Florida Statutes. Violations defined by ESA include harassing a nesting female, taking a hatchling or disturbing a nest.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

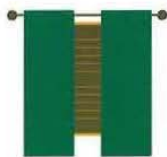
May 1 through October 31 of each year, beach residents must shield all lights that can be seen from the beach from **9 p.m. to 7 a.m.** Light can travel great distances so shielding is important to reduce visible lighting along the beach.

Lights may not directly or indirectly illuminate the beach. Even reflected light can disorient sea turtles. Interior lights can also illuminate the beach. Please close curtains or blinds after 9 p.m.

Motorized vehicles and open fires are not allowed on the beach during sea turtle nesting season.

All beach furniture and equipment must be removed from the beach from 9 p.m. until 7 a.m.

LIGHT SHIELDING TECHNIQUES



Close curtains or blinds.



Downlighting



Jelly-jar light with shield on three sides



Rotate the light away from the beach. It may need additional shielding to prevent reflection off of the building.

- Turn the light off.
- Cover and shield bare bulbs.
- Replace light bulbs with 25 watt yellow bug lights.
- Convert to 18 watt LOW pressure sodium lights. Please contact an electrician.
- Use motion detectors set on minimum duration.
- Install recessed lamps with low wattage bulbs.
- Turn off decorative uplighting on buildings and landscaping.



Shield the light with an opaque material on three sides.



Use low profile lighting or low bollards with low wattage bulbs and 180° shields on the beach side.



Plant dense vegetation between the light and the beach.