



Cleanup News for the Vieques Fishing Community

July 2010

For more information, please contact:

James Brantley, NAVFAC ATLANTIC Public Affairs Officer (757) 322-8005

<http://public.lantops-ir.org/sites/public/vieques>

Not all Vieques beaches and surrounding waters are open to the public

From the 1940s until 2003, the U.S. Navy used portions of Vieques Island and surrounding waters for amphibious training exercises, air-to-ground bombing, and as an explosives detonation range. The Navy has identified unexploded ordnance, often called UXO, and remnants of exploded ordnance in the former range areas of the eastern portion of the island, as well as in the surrounding waters. A comprehensive cleanup program is underway to remove the UXO and reduce the risk to the public from potentially dangerous munitions.



Boaters in dangerous waters.

How can I help?

For your safety, do not trespass in dangerous areas! Do not visit beaches in the danger zone, and do not anchor

commercial, charter or personal boats in waters surrounding the dangerous areas.

Remnants of explosive ordnance may be uncovered in the dunes and beaches or in the brush. However, because of weathering and deterioration, they may appear to be harmless pieces of scrap metal or coral debris, but they may still be dangerous munitions. Several of the munitions that remain on the surface are very sensitive and may explode from even the slightest disturbance. These items pose a safety hazard for commercial, charter and recreational boaters that continue to trespass into the dangerous areas.

To protect the public, the Navy has installed warning signs and blocked the roads leading to the portions of the former training area that contain munitions and explosives.

Warning buoys similar to the one pictured below have been installed to alert commercial, charter and recreational boaters that there is unexploded ordnance in those waters.



Warning buoy.



Local Notices to Mariners (LNMs) posted for waters around Vieques (District 7) can be found on the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) website at the following link:
<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=InmDistrict®=7>

Fishermen can also register to receive e-mail notices when the USCG posts LNMs for District 7.

When a Notice to Mariners is issued due to munitions demolition operations, please stay at least 6,000 feet away from the shoreline on the eastern end of Vieques.

What beaches are closed to the Public?

The map below shows areas of the island which are still off limits for public safety. Closed areas include beaches from Punta Cabellos Colorados on the north to Ensenada Honda on the south, including Playa Compañía (Purple Beach), Puerto Negro, Puerto Diablo, Bahía Icacos and Bahía del Sur, among others.

What beaches are safe to visit?

On the east side of the island Bahía Corcho/Playa Caracas (also known as Red Beach), Playa Pata Prieta, Playa de la Chiva (also known as Blue Beach), and Playa Escondida/Playa La Plata are open to the public. On the west side of the island, Punta Arenas (also known as Green Beach) is a public beach.

The map below shows which beaches are open and closed to the public.

Who do I contact for more information about UXOs and the Navy's clean-up program?

Contact James Brantley (757-322-8005), NAVFAC ATLANTIC Public Affairs Officer. Information also is available on the Internet at the following link: <http://public.lantops-ir.org/sites/public/vieques/default.aspx>

For information about Vieques National Wildlife Refuge operations, including areas closed to the public, contact the Vieques Refuge Manager at 787-741-2138.