

News

## BEACH ADS WADE INTO 'ICKY' WATER

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English

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Big bold letters stretch across the back of a lifeguard tower in Redondo Beach. Clashing with crashing waves and glowing sun, the word "ICKY" draws attention.

The display is part of an edgy new ad campaign from Heal the Bay, the nonprofit environmental organization that promotes healthy beaches.

The campaign was launched last week to raise awareness of water quality.

"We wanted something that would grab people's attention," said Matthew King, the organization's communications director. "That was the whole idea behind 'icky.'"

The entire message at the Redondo Beach tower reads: "It could be really ICKY in the water."

It is one of 30 lifeguard towers from Malibu to Cabrillo Beach advertising a new text-messaging service.

After texting the advertised number, people receive an immediate response with a water quality grade of A to F pulled from the Heal the Bay Beach Report Card.

The report card released May 21 revealed results of tests for fecal bacteria conducted from April 2007 to March. Swimming in water with a high bacteria count can lead to reactions ranging from an ear infection to the stomach flu.

Prime Point Media, a company in El Segundo that provides clients with advertising opportunities on phone kiosks, trash receptacles, and lifeguard towers, approached Heal the Bay with an opportunity to use lifeguard tower space at a discount rate for the summer.

"We thought this would be a great fit for this Beach Report Card launch," said Prime Point Media Vice President Fred Demisa. "There is nothing more relevant for water-quality awareness than having ads at the beach."

Demisa said the lifeguard towers are located where the Heal the Bay water testing was performed, and that those towers were selected as the advertising sites.

"So when someone's getting a text message at that tower, it's giving you data from where that water was actually tested," he said.

The Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors, which has authority over advertisements on lifeguard towers, approved the campaign.

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FIND OUT MORE

To receive text messages about South Bay beach water quality, send a text message to 23907 and type the following codes for these specific locations. More locations are available at [www.healththebay.org](http://www.healththebay.org) [<http://www.healththebay.org>]

Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach -- mdrmothers

Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek -- ballona

Manhattan Beach at 40th Street -- mb40

Hermosa Beach Pier -- hermosapier

Herondo Street storm drain -- herondo

Redondo Beach at Avenue I drain -- avenuei

Malaga Cove, Palos Verdes Estates -- malagad

Palos Verdes Estates -- bluffcove

Rancho Palos Verdes -- longpoint

Cabrillo Beach -- harborside at lifeguard tower -- cabrillo

photo, box; Caption: Photo: (color) Heal the Bay has posted signs on 30 lifeguard towers from Malibu to Cabrillo Beach, such as this one at Rat Beach in Torrance, that give a number to text-message to get a beach water quality report. Steve McCrank/Staff Photographer Box: FIND OUT MORE (see text)

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