



OVERVIEW

Every summer, Sarasota County beaches host the largest population of nesting sea turtles on the Gulf Coast of Florida. Some of the biggest threats to hatchlings are man-made (like artificial lighting and nesting obstructions). The Sarasota County **Marine Turtle Protection Ordinance** (MTPO) regulates artificial lighting and beach furniture placement throughout nesting season for the protection of sea turtles.

MTPO REQUIREMENTS (WHAT DO I DO?)



REDUCE BEACH LIGHTING

- Check and replace exterior lighting with long-wavelength bulbs (i.e., red or amber LEDs)
- Pair long-wavelength bulbs with a shielded fixture so lights are directed downward
- Turn off decorative lighting (e.g., string lights, landscape uplighting and reflective lighting)
- Use turtle tint or other window treatments to reduce interior lighting

SECURE BEACH FURNITURE

- Remove furniture and recreational items from the beach nightly
- Store furniture and recreational items in accordance with an approved Recreational Use Agreement

BEST BEACH PRACTICES

- Avoid using flashlights
- Knock down sandcastles and fill in holes
- Take all belongings and trash with you



REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

The Marine Turtle Protection Ordinance (Chapter 54, Article XXIII) is available online at https://library.municode.com/fl/sarasota_county (keywords: marine turtle protection ordinance).

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) lighting guidance are also available online at <https://myfwc.com/conservation/you-serve/lighting>.

Contact Sarasota County Environmental Protection staff or visit us online for more information.



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