



**CONTACT:**  
**Jennifer Dexter**  
Communications Coordinator  
239-765-0202, ext. 1112  
Jennifer.dexter@fmbgov.com

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2525 Estero Blvd., Fort Myers Beach, Fla. 33931

## **The Town is asking for the public's help to prevent disorientation of turtle hatchlings**

**Town of Fort Myers Beach, FL** – It's the height of sea turtle nesting season on Fort Myers Beach and hatchlings are starting to emerge from their nests. Unfortunately, some of them are going the wrong way due to being disoriented by lights from houses, condos, and resorts.

Turtle Time, Inc., the organization that monitors sea turtle nesting season on Fort Myers Beach, reports that, this morning, some hatchlings were found under condos and houses because the property's lights disoriented them. Some were rescued but many likely perished due to predators, exhaustion, and dehydration.

The Town is asking property owners, residents, and visitors to help prevent disorientations and hatchling deaths with just these three simple steps:

- 1) Draw curtains after sunset;
- 2) Turn off unnecessary lights indoors and outdoors;
- 3) Use the proper long wavelength outdoor lights that are downward directed and shielded from the beach.

It is important to draw curtains after sunset to shield interior lights because these lights can be the source of many hatchling disorientations. Cooling sand after the sun goes down cues hatchlings to emerge from their nests.

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The Town of Fort Myers Beach, incorporated since 1995, is on Estero Island off the southwest Florida coast of the Gulf of Mexico. The beach stretches for seven miles and has sugar-white sand and spectacular shell finds and sunsets. The Town has a variety of unique cultural, parks, recreational and natural settings, as well as shops and restaurants.

The Town also asks property owners and managers of beachfront properties to turn off unnecessary outside lights and/or convert exterior lights to long wavelength bulbs in downward directed fixtures that shield the bulbs from the beach. Long wavelength light is on the ROY side of Rainbow's ROYGBIV, whereas white light contains the entire spectrum.

Read about proper turtle lighting: <https://myfwc.com/wildlifeh.../wildlife/sea-turtle/lighting/>

Loggerhead Turtles are protected by the Endangered Species Act, Florida's Marine Turtle Protection Act, and The Town of Fort Myers Beach Sea Turtle Conservation Code.

The Town considers disorientations of sea turtle hatchlings from man-made lights as an irreparable and irreversible violation with a fine of up to \$5,000.

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