



March 26, 2014

Dear Mr. Ask:

Thank you for your recent inquiry into the cleaning and maintenance of Sarasota County public beaches. Mechanical beach cleaning is most often conducted on beaches that can accommodate the tractor and "Barber" surf rake. This accommodation is most often related to the slope of the beach, the sand's ability to compact (size and shape of the sand), and the type of debris to be cleaned. The county is prepared to mechanically and or manually clean all of the public beaches.

Along most of the beaches in Sarasota County, beach slopes and sand grain size and shape preclude the ability for mechanized beach cleaning. The tractor and rake become stuck in the soft sands and steep beach slopes. In these cases, the beaches are cleaned manually. In cases of dead fish or heavy amounts of seaweed, a combination of manual labor and very heavy equipment are used to conduct these larger beach cleaning operations.

Siesta Beach has slopes and sand characteristics that enable mechanized beach cleaning and therefore, Siesta Beach does receive more mechanized cleaning than any other beaches that the County manages. This is true along all of Crescent Beach on Siesta Key.

Parks and Recreation maintains all public beaches with the same intent and levels of service by providing sustainably designed, programmed, maintained and managed park sites. Siesta Beach typically requires more county resources, because its open beach is much larger in size than other public beaches in the county, it has more visitors, more parking spaces, an active concessionaire, and has many beach access points that provide public access to adjacent private properties over a large area.



However, Nokomis Beach does share some common characteristics with Siesta Beach which includes beautiful sandy beaches and Caribbean blue waters. Also, both Nokomis Beach and Siesta Beach are guarded beaches and the Florida Healthy Beaches program monitors water quality at Siesta and Nokomis Beaches, among other recreational swimming beaches in the county.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolyn Brown", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Carolyn Brown
Director, Sarasota County Parks and Recreation