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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Tina Haisman, ASBPA Media Relations, 239-292-2882  
Tom Campbell, president, Coastal Planning and Engineering, 561-262-0363

**Beaches 101: Storms and waves steal sand from your beach**

FORT MYERS, FL – When choppy waves crash on the shore of your beach, there’s more going on than meets the eye.

“Waves caused by cold fronts, nor’easters and hurricanes move sand from the beach in two directions,” says Tom Campbell, president of Coastal Planning and Engineering in Boca Raton, Fla. “The waves move the sand both away from the shore and along the shore.”

This causes both temporary and permanent sand loss to the beach and is called beach erosion. Temporary beach erosion is not a big concern, because the sand usually migrates back to the beach on its own. However, permanent erosion is much more serious, because the houses, businesses, roads and utilities that are normally set back on the beach can be damaged or destroyed when the beach becomes too narrow.

Experts say waves rarely move toward the coast perfectly perpendicularly – they usually approach on an angle. This causes a current along the beach that can move large amounts of sand.

“Think about a windy day at the beach when you are in the water – you might have a hard time staying in front of your blanket, because the current is moving you,” Campbell explains. “The current moves sand along the beach in this same way.”

When this moving sand hits an inlet, it can get trapped in it and may be permanently lost from the beach system. As a result, beaches on the other side of these inlets often experience higher rates of erosion.

Although to a smaller extent, sea level rise also traps sand and keeps it from returning to the beach.

More than half of American beaches are currently experiencing some level of permanent sand loss; the rest are either stable or gaining sand. Although it widely varies, the beaches that are losing sand lose an average of 2 feet to 3 feet per year.

The good news is that we do have solutions to help control beach erosion. In order to restore beaches and reinforce the sandy barrier between erosive waves and the structures and infrastructure near the beach, hundreds of American coastal communities have successfully nourished their beaches by bringing sand back to the beach mechanically, either from the offshore ocean bottom or from inlets. “In a sense, it’s turning back the clock for these communities,” Campbell said. “In addition to preserving their property, they are reinvigorating the recreation aspects of their beach.”

For more information about the health of your beach, visit [www.asbpa.org](http://www.asbpa.org).

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**ABOUT ASBPA**

Founded in 1926, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) represents the scientific, technical and political interests along the coast in an effort to shape national research and policy concerning shore and beach management and restoration. ASBPA strives to engage in a factual debate on coastal issues and economics that will foster sound, far-sighted and economical development and preservation of our beaches; thereby aiding in placing their beliefs within the reach of the largest possible number of people in accordance with the ideals of a democratic nation. For additional information about ASBPA, please visit [www.asbpa.org](http://www.asbpa.org).