
US Memorial Day 2020: Beaches, Tourist Spots Full Amid Pandemic

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Beaches, parks, and other destinations across the United States filled up this weekend for Memorial Day, causing alarms among health experts who fear new waves of coronavirus infections.

In the Tampa area, along Florida's Gulf Coast, there were so many people that authorities had to close parking lots. The county's sheriff Bob Gualtieri said about 300 deputies were patrolling the beaches to ensure people did not get too close.

In the state of Missouri, people crammed in bars and restaurants at the Lake of the Ozarks, a vacation hot spot. One video showed a pool packed with vacationers who lounged close together without masks, St Louis station KMOV-TV reported.

In West Virginia, ATV riders jammed the vast, 700-mile Hatfield-McCoy network of all-terrain vehicle trails on the first weekend it was allowed to reopen since the outbreak started. Campgrounds and cabins were also opened.

"We truly appreciate getting to reopen," executive director of the Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority, Jeff Lusk, told the Charleston Gazette-Mail. "Being able to open now will help our trail businesses recover."

Yet, these scenes of people crowding together over the weekend raised concerns among health experts.

"We really want to be clear all the time that social distancing is absolutely critical. And if you can't social distance and you're outside, you must wear a mask," coordinator of the White House coronavirus taskforce Deborah Birx said Sunday on ABC.

The pandemic in the U.S. -the hardest-hit country in the world- has infected more than 1,686,000 people. The country is expected to surpass the 100,000 coronavirus deaths in the next few days.

