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## Dewey Beach replenishment project kicks off

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DEWEY BEACH -- The town's beach replenishment project, postponed due to poor weather conditions, has officially kicked off, officials said.

Originally slated to begin in January, the project aims to rebuild the town's shoreline and offer storm protection to residents and businesses along the coast.

"I am personally not concerned. It's not that far behind (schedule) and it seems to be progressing," Dewey Beach Commissioner Diane Hanson said. "As long as it is complete by the beginning of the summer season, we'll be pleased to have our beaches renewed."

Work, which commenced Tuesday, is scheduled to reach completion by the end of April when the Army Corps of Engineers, the agency in charge, will move to Bethany Beach to rebuild the shoreline eroded last year by a late-season nor'easter.

Officials estimate the project will cost \$7.5 million, with \$6 million going to Dewey and an estimated \$1.5 million funding the work in Bethany Beach.

"I'm just glad to know we'll see a renewed beach this summer," said Claudia Wallace of Dewey Beach. "The weather and influx of visitors was difficult on our sand last season. Having a fresh start is key to preserving (the town)."

The contract for the renourishment project was awarded to Weeks Marine Inc. on Sept. 24 and includes the placement of 300,000 cubic yards of sand in Dewey Beach and 100,000 cubic yards in Bethany Beach and South Bethany. In Dewey Beach, the sand will be placed between Palmer Avenue and Salisbury Street, officials said.

During the project, a large boat will dredge sand from Fenwick Shoal to Dewey Beach. Sand will then be pumped onto the shoreline from that vessel. According to officials, renourishment typically takes place once every three years.

"Most of our residents are very excited to see the project start and finish before the summer season," Town Manager Gordon Elliott said. "But most of all, they're excited that the process will make their beach bigger."



Beach replenishment work began in Dewey Beach on Tuesday, March 10. (John King photo)