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Corps wants beach requests early

Monday, October 20, 2003

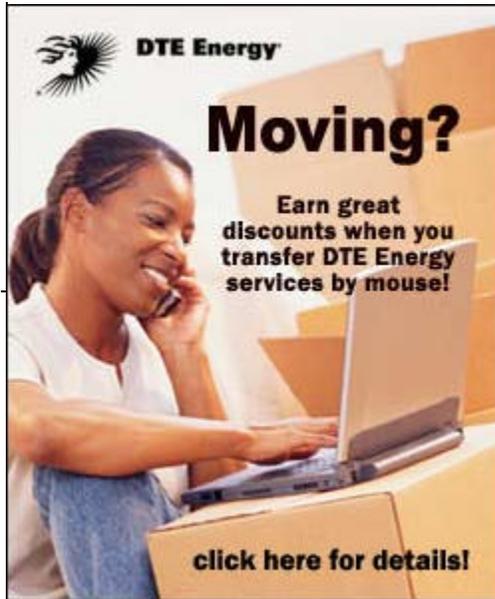
By Crystal Harmon
TIMES WRITER

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers urges waterfront property owners to get a jump on spring cleanup by applying now for next year's beach-maintenance permit.

"We traditionally see a decrease in the number of applications received after Labor Day, so now is the time to submit an application so that you have a permit in place before you need it," said Lt. Col. Tom Magness, district engineer for the Detroit District.

The new one-page permit created for minor activities can be downloaded at the Corps' Web site, www.lre.usace.army.mil.

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As of last week, the Corps has received 214 of the new streamlined permits and approved 170, at least in part. The

rest are pending, denied or partially approved, according to the Corps.

Turnaround time for the applications averaged 15 days - far quicker than in the past, when property owners often waited months for an answer to their requests for permission to level sand, create a path or build a boardwalk.

The Corps said 85 percent of property owners surveyed were satisfied with the new application process, and 75 percent said they received a permit decision in a reasonable amount of time.

"Our goal is to conduct good government, and that means we will listen to our customers through vehicles like this survey, continue to improve our process and be trustworthy stewards of the Great Lakes and surrounding shorelines," Magness said.

Besides handling permit applications, Corps field officers visited more than 60 property owners who wanted to know where the Corps line of jurisdiction was on their property.

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