

MEDIA RELEASE

Information **Advisory** **Warning** **Update**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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St. Clair County Health Department Resumes Water Quality Monitoring at Eight Beaches

The St. Clair County Health Department (SCCHD) Environmental Health Division has resumed its seasonal beach monitoring program. The SCCHD collects water samples to test for E. coli bacteria at eight public beaches weekly through Labor Day. Monitored beaches include: Lakeport State Campground, Fort Gratiot County Park, Keewahdin, Lakeside, Holland, Conger-Lighthouse, Chrysler and Marine City.

E. coli bacteria is found in the digestive systems of warm blooded animals, including humans, and can indicate the presence of viruses and pathogens that cause illnesses. Water naturally contains microorganisms regardless of how clean or clear the water looks. Beaches may close after a rain storm or strong winds because bacteria are washed into waterways or stirred up from waves.

In order to remain open, public beaches must meet the State of Michigan's full body contact standards of 300 E. coli bacteria per 100 ml of water. When these standards are exceeded, an advisory is issued for the beach. Water samples are collected daily until the E. coli test results are within the acceptable range.

In 2019, the SCCHD completed fourteen weeks of continuous sampling from Memorial Day to Labor Day resulting in just three days of closure at two beaches, making it one of the healthiest beach seasons on record. Improved water quality has been made possible by reducing pathogen sources through sewer separation projects, elimination of illicit discharges, and installation of green infrastructure along the 58-mile county shoreline.

Current advisories for St. Clair County's public beaches are shared on the SCCHD's 24-hour Water Quality Hotline at 877-504-SWIM, "St. Clair County Beaches" Facebook page, "MyBeachCast" application for smartphones, and Michigan BeachGuard website at www.eagle.state.mi.us/beach/.

For more information, visit www.stclaircounty.org/Offices/health/bathing.aspx or contact our Environmental Health Division at (810) 987-5306. Follow us on social media @scchdmi.

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