

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DATE: April 16, 2007

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State Issues Bacteria Warning For Coastal Beaches

CONCORD, NH- The N.H. Department of Environmental Services has issued a bacteria warning for all of New Hampshire coastal beaches due to stormwater runoff resulting from the flood conditions. The bacteria warnings were issued on April 16, 2007. Swimmers and surfers will likely be subjected to high levels of bacteria for the next several days and water ingestion could lead to increased incidences of waterborne diseases from pathogenic organisms. Cloudy, turbid or colored waters are good visual indicators of poor water quality. Surface runoff and flooding will likely result in elevated bacteria levels from watershed activities associated with agriculture runoff, septic system discharge and combined sewer overflows.

DES routinely monitors coastal beaches for Enterococci bacteria, indicators of human or animal fecal pollution, from June through Labor Day. Elevated Enterococci levels can indicate the presence of other potentially pathogenic or disease-causing organisms. Diseases that may be transmitted by contaminated water include gastroenteritis, eye and ear infections, and skin rashes. Symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, mild fever, and general malaise.

For more information about the warning or the DES Beach Program, please call the Program Coordinator, Sara Sumner at (603) 271-8803, or Jody Connor, the Program Manager, at (603) 271-3414.

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