

Health Unit Media Release



Contact: Susan Healey, Communications Co-ordinator, 613-345-5685
Joan Goodfellow, Assistant to the Director of Health Protection, 613-345-5685

BATHING BEACH WATER QUALITY

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's Public Health Inspectors will once again begin weekly water sampling of the area's public bathing beaches. The beaches will be monitored weekly throughout the summer season up to and including Labour Day.

This year the following public swimming areas will be monitored:

In Lanark County: Almonte Beach, Dalhousie Lake, Centennial Beach, Riverside Beach, Lanark Beach, Pakenham Beach, Rideau Ferry Yacht Club, Robertson Lake Beach, Smiths Falls Jr, Smiths Falls Sr

In Leeds and Grenville: St. Lawrence Park, Lyn Valley Conservation Area, South Crosby Beach, Portland Campbell Street Beach, Foley Mountain Beach, Grippen Lake Camp, Camp Hyanto, Joel Stone Beach, Kendrick's Park, Lower Beverley Township Park, Bellamy Park, Kelly's Beach, Merrickville, Westport Sand Lake

Every week a total of five water samples will be collected from each beach. The results will then be analyzed for the presence of E. coli (Escherichia coli) bacteria. **If the result exceeds the bathing water standard of 100 E. coli, the swimming area will be posted as "Unsafe for Bathing"**. Research has shown that where swimming beaches have a high E. coli level there is a direct relationship with an increase in ear, eye, nose and throat infections in swimmers. The bathing beach will remain posted until test results indicate that the water quality has recovered.

Bacterial water quality is one parameter used to determine water quality. Other variables, which are assessed and evaluated, are the presence of blue green algae bloom, poor water clarity and accidental spills of pollution. At any time if these variables are believed to impact on the beach's safety, the beach will be posted as "Unsafe for Bathing".

Posting information is available on the Health Unit web site, www.healthunit.org or by calling the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853.

###