

# NEWS RELEASE



June 2, 2010

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## ***Oregon Public Health issues advisory for water contact at Tolovana State Park Beach***

An Oregon Public Health advisory was issued Wednesday due to higher-than-normal levels of bacteria in ocean waters at Tolovana State Park Beach in Clatsop County.

“Water samples indicate higher-than-normal levels of fecal bacteria, which can result in gastroenteritis, skin rashes, upper respiratory infections and other illnesses. Direct contact with the water should be avoided until the advisories are lifted, especially for children and the elderly, who may be more vulnerable to waterborne bacteria,” said Jennifer Ketterman, Oregon Public Health Beach Program coordinator.

Increased pathogen and fecal bacteria levels in ocean waters can come from both shore and inland sources such as storm water runoff, sewer overflows, failing septic systems and even animal waste from livestock, pets and wildlife.

While these advisories are in effect at Tolovana State Park Beach, visitors should avoid wading in nearby creeks or in discolored water, and stay clear of water runoff flowing into the ocean. Even if there is no advisory in effect, officials recommend avoiding swimming in the ocean within 48 hours after a rainstorm.

Health officials advise that the status of water contact advisories at beaches is subject to change. For the most recent information on advisories, please visit [www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/beaches/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/beaches/index.shtml) or call the Environmental Public Health hotline at 877-290-6767.

***(more)***

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Although state officials discourage water contact in the affected area at this time, they continue to encourage other recreational activities, such as walking or picnicking on these beaches. These activities pose no health risk even during an advisory. Neighboring beaches are not affected by this advisory.

Since 2003 state officials have used a federal Environmental Protection Agency grant to monitor popular Oregon beaches and make timely reports to the public about elevated levels of fecal bacteria. State agencies participating in this program include the Oregon Public Health Beach Program, the Department of Environmental Quality and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. More detailed test results are available at [www.healthoregon.org/beach](http://www.healthoregon.org/beach).

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