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Health advisories lifted for water contact at Sunset Bay, Harris, and Mill beaches

Health advisories for contact with marine water at Sunset Bay State Park Beach in Coos County and at Harris State Park Beach and Mill Beach in Curry County were lifted today by the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

The advisories were issued Thursday, after water samples at Sunset Bay State Park Beach, Harris State Park Beach and Mill Beach showed higher-than-normal levels of *enterococcus*, a type of fecal bacteria, in the marine water. Subsequent testing showed the contamination had subsided and the waters did not pose a higher-than-normal risk associated with water-contact activities.

State officials encourage recreational activities at all Oregon beaches, suggesting only that water contact be avoided when advisories are in effect.

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. Oregon state agencies participating in this program are DHS, DEQ and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. More detailed test results are available at www.healthoregon.org/beach.

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