

News release

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Health advisory issued for Alsea River Beach

Higher-than-normal bacteria levels found at Lincoln County beach

A public health advisory was issued today due to higher-than-normal levels of bacteria in ocean waters at Alsea River Recreation Area Beach in Lincoln County.

The higher-than-normal level was found in the river upstream of the Alsea Bay Bridge. Samples taken from the river in this area are considered marine samples because of the heavy influence of the ocean tide that increases the river's salinity level.

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

Water samples indicate higher-than-normal levels of fecal bacteria, which can result in diarrhea, stomach cramps, skin rashes, upper respiratory infections and other illnesses.

(more)

While this advisory is in effect at Alsea River Recreation Area Beach, visitors should avoid direct contact with water in this area, especially children and the elderly, who may be more vulnerable to waterborne bacteria.

Even if there is no advisory in effect, officials recommend avoiding swimming in these areas and in the ocean within 48 hours after a rainstorm.

State officials advise that the status of water contact advisories is subject to change. For the most recent information on advisories, please visit the [Beach Monitoring Program](#) website or call 1-877-290-6767.

Although state officials discourage water contact, they continue to encourage other recreational activities in the area and on beaches because they 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. Oregon state organizations participating in this program are Oregon Public Health, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. For more information, contact the [Beach Monitoring Program](#) at 1-877-290-6767.

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