

Monday, October 1, 2007

For Immediate Release

2007 beach sampling program ends for the season

NEWMARKET – The Regional Municipality of York beach sampling program has now ended for the 2007 season. York Region Health Services monitored water quality at 18 York Region public bathing beaches during the summer months to ensure that the water quality was safe for swimming. High levels of bacteria in the water can cause skin, ear, eye, nose and throat infections as well as stomach disorders.

If the level of bacteria was high enough to cause illness, York Region Health Services posted a sign at the beach warning residents the beach was unsafe for bathing and that the high level of bacteria in the water may pose a health risk. When the water was re-tested and bacteria levels returned to an acceptable level, the posting was removed.

In 2007, beaches were posted due to high bacterial levels for a total of 153 days. A summary of York Region beach postings and closures for the 2007 season (June 13th to September 4th) is included as an attachment. The beach sampling program will resume in June 2008.

Water samples were collected from each beach site once per week during the summer season. The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Laboratories Branch tested the water samples for bacterial quality. Beaches were posted when water sample results indicated elevated E. coli levels above the provincial guidelines of 100 E coli per 100ml of water. There were no beach closures for the 2007 beach monitoring season. Beaches are closed when there are indications of hazardous or infectious materials present in the water, or in the event of a blue-green algae bloom.

Some factors that contribute to increased levels of E. coli in beach water include, but are not limited to:

- Seasonal and storm surface run-off into rivers and lakes
- Warm water temperatures
- Large populations of waterfowl
- Domestic pet waste run-off
- Agricultural manure and feedlot run-off
- Boating wastes
- Malfunctioning private sewage disposal systems
- Sewer overflows

Permanent signs were posted at the public bathing beaches reminding the public not to swim in water for at least 48 hours after a heavy rainfall. Bacteria levels can increase due to heavy rainfall run-off into lakes.

For more information on this or any other health-related topic, please contact York Region Health Services *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653.

For more information on The Regional Municipality of York and our services, please visit www.york.ca

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Attachment: 2007 Beach Sampling Program Summary Fact Sheet



2007 beach sampling program summary

The York Region beach monitoring program for the 2007 season ran from June 13 to September 4, 2007.

Water samples were collected from 18 beach sites once per week during the summer season. The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Laboratories Branch analyzed the water samples for bacterial quality.

Beaches were posted when water sample results indicated elevated E. coli levels. Posted beaches were resampled the following day. Overall, beaches in 2007 were posted for more days than in the previous two years.

Beaches are closed when there are indications of hazardous or infectious materials present in the water, or in the event of a blue-green algae bloom. There were no beach closures for the 2007 beach monitoring season.

Beaches Posted due to levels of E. coli greater than the provincial guideline of 100 E. coli per 100ml.

Municipality: Town of Georgina

Beach	Date Posted	Number of Days Posted
Port Bolster	June 21, 2007	1
	August 9, 2007	1
	August 16, 2007	1
Peninsula Motel	June 21, 2007	1
	August 2, 2007	7
	August 16, 2007	7
Holmes Point	June 21, 2007	1
Jackson's Point	June 21, 2007	1
	July 12, 2007	7
	July 26, 2007	7
	August 30, 2007	6
De La Salle	June 21, 2007	1
	June 28, 2007	7
	July 26, 2007	1
	August 2, 2007	8
	August 16, 2007	5
Willow Wharf Dock	June 21, 2007	1
	June 28, 2007	7
	August 9, 2007	1
	August 16, 2007	1
	August 23, 2007	1
Willow/Paradise	June 21, 2007	1
	August 9, 2007	1
	August 16, 2007	1
	August 23, 2007	5

Claredon Beach Claredon Beach (cont'd)	July 12, 2007	6
	August 9, 2007	1
	August 16, 2007	12
	August 30, 2007	1
Glenwoods	June 21, 2007	1
	August 9, 2007	1

Municipality: Town of Richmond Hill

Beach	Date Posted	Number of Days Posted
Sunset Beach	August 9, 2007	1
	August 16, 2007	1
	August 23, 2007	5
	August 30, 2007	1

Municipality: Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Beach	Date Posted	Number of Days Posted
Cedar Beach	June 21, 2007	1
	July 19, 2007	21
	August 23, 2007	5
	August 30, 2007	6
Shadow Beach	August 16, 2007	5

The total number of days beaches were posted due to high bacterial levels was 153.

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