

September 8, 2017

## **BEACH CONDITIONS TO September 7**

Water testing this week has shown that levels of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) were within recreational water quality guidelines at most beaches monitored by Manitoba Sustainable Development.

*Escherichia coli* counts were above the recreational water quality objective at Gull Harbour, Spruce Sands, Gimli, Sandy Hook, Milne and Winnipeg Beach (Lake Winnipeg) on September 5 but quickly returned to acceptable levels by September 7.

Bathers are advised to avoid swallowing lake water, wash hands before handling food, and avoid swimming with an open cut or wound, or while experiencing illness. On Lake Winnipeg, bathers should minimize water contact if lake levels are high and strong winds are blowing from the north. Research shows *E. coli* counts tend to be elevated during these conditions as they are washed out of the wet beach sand and into the bathing area.

Algal blooms are difficult to predict and may form and then disperse quickly or last for several days or weeks. Warm and calm weather coupled with relatively high nutrient loads provide ideal conditions for blue-green algae to develop. People are reminded to avoid swimming in water where severe algal blooms are visible and to prevent pets from drinking water along the shoreline where algal blooms are present. Home and cottage owners who use lake water as a source for drinking water should be aware that most small treatment systems are unable to remove algal toxins. Therefore, where blue-green algal blooms are present, avoid drinking the water or using it for other domestic purposes.

Information on beach water quality results, advisory signs posted at beaches and swimmer and water safety is available at: [manitoba.ca/beaches](http://manitoba.ca/beaches).

This is the last beach condition report for the 2017 summer season.