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Health Department of Northwest Michigan

Richardi Park Beach Advisory Continues

Partial body contact recommended

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW) is extending a partial body contact advisory for Richardi Park Beach in Antrim County, Michigan. A water sample collected Tuesday showed an E. coli level of 506.3 per 100ml, which calls for restricted use based on Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) water quality standards. The advisory is posted at the beach.

Richardi Park Beach has been under this advisory since August 24. The park beach has historically had issues with elevated E. coli levels. Usually, the level clears up after a day or two, but that has not been the case recently.

“Environmental Health staff who collect the samples have told me they usually observe significant amounts of goose/duck feces on or near the beach and also flocks of waterfowl on the water,” said Dan Thorell, HDNW Interim Health Officer. “If you look at the where the beach is located, the water from upstream tends to form an eddy at that location prior to moving through the dam spill way. Our lab has been preserving samples and will perform molecular source tracking to determine the origin of the E. coli (human or other animals).”

The lab analysis will take place in the late fall or winter. HDNW is also considering additional samples upstream to determine if the elevated E. coli is present in other areas of the Intermediate River.

Levels testing between 301 and 1000 per 100ml qualify for partial body contact advisories, based on EGLE standards. Levels 300 per 100ml allow for full body contact. At the current level of 506.3, HDNW continues to recommend limiting water contact there to wading, fishing, and paddling. Contact above the waist is not advised.

HDNW posts beach monitoring reports on its website at <https://www.nwhealth.org/beach.html>.

Through an EGLE supported web-based program, the public has real-time access to beach water quality results for beaches all over Michigan. Information can be found at www.deq.state.mi.us/beach/.

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The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.