

August 30, 2019

BEACH CONDITIONS TO AUGUST 29

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

Escherichia coli counts were above the recreational water quality objective on August 26 at Birds Hill Park West beach and on Lake Winnipeg at East and West Grand beaches, but quickly returned below the objective by August 28.

Escherichia coli counts remain above the recreational water quality objective at St. Malo beach, Birds Hill Park East and Central beaches, and on Lake Winnipeg at Sunset beach, Patricia beach, Grindstone, Gull Harbour, Gimli, Sandy Hook, Milne and Winnipeg Beach. Advisory signs will remain posted at these beaches until the end of the season on September 3.

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.

Please note this is the final weekly beach conditions report for 2019.