

August 29, 2019

Swim advisory issued for Dog River and Fowl River

MOBILE, Alabama — The Mobile County Health Department advises the public that swimming water quality on Dog River near the Alba Fishing & Hunting Club and on Fowl River near Highway 193 is poor. Swimming in these areas might lead to an increased risk of illness. Recent tests at these sample sites rose above acceptable levels.

Monitoring will continue and the advisory will be lifted once bacteria values fall below the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) threshold of 104 enterococcus organisms per 100 milliliters for marine water.

The Alabama Department of Public Health and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management operate the bacteriological water quality monitoring and notification program under a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency's BEACH (Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health) Act Program. This program involves the routine collection of water samples from a total of 25 coastal recreational sites in Mobile and Baldwin counties (to see the testing locations please visit www.adem.state.al.us/programs/coastal/BeachMonitoring.cnt).

In the summer months, samples are taken once or twice a week at the most highly used sites and biweekly at the other sites. All sites are tested once a month in the cooler months. The Dog River and Fowl River locations will be tested again in coming days.

Samples are analyzed for enterococci bacteria. High counts indicate that the possibility that other disease-causing germs could be present in the water. Based on EPA's "Criteria for Bathing (full body contact) Recreational Waters," samples are checked for enterococcus bacteria. These indicator bacteria are inhabitants of the intestines of humans and other warm-blooded animals.

Bacterial concentrations in recreational waters can increase during and immediately following rainstorms because of overflowing sewage collection and treatment facilities, storm water runoff and malfunctioning septic systems.

When monitoring results exceed the EPA standard, the affected site is immediately retested. If the results of the second test identify enterococci levels persisting above the EPA standard, the health department through the cooperative efforts of the news media will issue a public advisory.

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