



State of Utah

Department of
Environmental Quality

Amanda Smith
Executive Director

ad T Johnson
Deputy Director

GARY R. HERBERT.
Governor

Lieutenant Governor

NEWS RELEASE

Thursday, June 10, 2010

Contacts:

Lance Madigan, (801) 851-7531 or (801) 404-7651

Utah County Health Department, PIO

Donna Kemp Spangler, (801) 536-4484 or (801) 554-4944

Utah Department of Environmental Quality, PIO

Agencies team up to monitor popular waters for E. coli Swimming Advisory issued for Salem Pond

Salt Lake City, Utah – State health and environmental officials have teamed up with other local and federal agencies to routinely monitor popular recreational destinations to determine bacteria levels in lakes and reservoirs commonly used for recreation.

The E. Coli Workgroup was recently formed to assess the level of E. coli in popular recreational waterways. E. coli is a useful and reliable indicator of pathogen contamination from human and animal waste. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, scientists and trained technicians will sample beaches and reservoirs about every two weeks. Information about unsafe conditions will be posted because people who come in contact with contaminated water can develop gastrointestinal illness.

“We created an E. Coli Workgroup to expand cooperative monitoring of recreational waters throughout the state to step up efforts to caution people who may be at increased risk of illness from contact with this water,” said Walt Baker, Utah Division of Water Quality director.

“We don’t want to unduly alarm people, but we want people to be aware of an increased risk of illness,” said Dr. Joseph Miner, Utah County Health Department executive director.

E. coli beach monitoring in Utah County includes Salem Pond and Utah Lake. Testing at Salem Pond has shown some measurements of E. coli exceed national and state recreational water standards. Therefore, Salem City and Utah County Health Department officials will be posting signs advising visitors of increased risk from E. coli contaminations in the water. The advisory is not a beach closing, but it is advisable to avoid coming into contact with contaminated water. If you have come into contact with contaminated water, you should wash with soap and water afterwards.

Fishing at Salem Pond is not affected by this advisory. E. coli stays in the intestines of fish.

-MORE-

It does not affect the fish or the filet. As long as you cook the fish properly, the fish you catch are safe to eat. Also, remember to wash your hands with hot, soapy water after handling any wild game.

The E. coli Workgroup is comprised of stakeholders from a broad base of agencies with land management, health, environment, and recreation duties. Those include representatives from DEQ, Health, Parks, Agriculture, municipalities, Bureau of Reclamation, Tribes, USU Extension, and recreational groups. Workgroup meetings are open to all interested parties and held quarterly. For more information, visit: www.ecoli.utah.gov.

###