



Coastal Health District

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NEWS RELEASE
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Beach Advisory Issued for Polk Street Beach on Tybee Island

CHATHAM COUNTY, GA – The Chatham County Health Department has issued a water quality advisory for Polk Street Beach, from the end of the beach to the jetty, on Tybee Island. This advisory is only for the specified area and does not impact any other beaches on the island.

The Department of Natural Resources - Coastal Resources Division tests water samples at Chatham County beaches throughout the year. The test screens for enterococcus (pronounced: en-ter-o-coc-cus) bacteria, which are found in humans and some wildlife.

When a beach is under advisory, it means the level of bacteria found in the water is above the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recommended standards. Periodic advisories are not unusual, and sources of the bacteria could include animal waste, storm water runoff, or boating waste.

The advisory does NOT mean the beach is closed. Beach water advisories alert the public of a possible risk of illness associated with water contact in the advisory areas. The Health Department recommends you do not swim or wade in the water in the area under advisory. Fish and other seafood caught from the area should be thoroughly washed with fresh water and thoroughly cooked before eating, as should fish or seafood caught from any waters.

The beach area under advisory will be re-tested, and the advisory will be lifted when the bacteria levels meet the EPA's recommended standards. For more information about beach water testing, go to GaCHD.org and click on the Environmental Health tab at the top of the page.

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