



Sarasota County Health Department | Florida Department of Health  
scgov.net | 941-861-5000 | Comcast 19/Verizon 32

**Oct. 20, 2011**

**Media contact:** Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852, cell: 941-302-1058,  
Dianne\_Shipley@doh.state.fl.us  
Liz Bumpus, 941-861-2964, cell: 941-356-1167,  
Liz\_Bumpus@doh.state.fl.us

## **Sarasota area beach water advisory issued for Turtle Beach**

A beach water advisory has been issued for Turtle Beach. Sarasota County Health Department officials received testing results from beach water samples taken on Wednesday, Oct. 19, that show an elevated level of enterococci (enteric) bacteria.

Signage advising the public not to swim or engage in water recreation in the Turtle Beach area will remain in place until follow-up water testing results are satisfactory.

The Health Department plans to conduct follow-up water sampling on Friday, Oct. 21, with results expected on Saturday afternoon.

The elevations being reported today occurred following recent rains which could contribute to stormwater runoff and impact water quality. The red tide algae bloom in the area is not implicated in this enteric bacteria beach water advisory.

"We never like to issue advisories and are sensitive to their impact to the community. However, as part of our role in protecting the health of the public, we conduct weekly water sampling at 16 area beaches along Sarasota County's 34 miles of beaches, following a protocol established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)," says Sarasota County Health Department's administrator Chuck Henry. "The intent of this program is to provide county residents and visitors with accurate, up-to-date information on the water quality at our beaches."

Enteric bacteria can come from stormwater runoff, pet waste and wildlife and human sewage. When detected in high concentrations in recreational waters, these bacteria can cause gastrointestinal illnesses, infections or rashes if ingested while swimming or after entering the skin through a cut or sore.

Residents and visitors may still use these beaches but they are urged not to wade or swim in the water or engage in water recreation until the advisory is lifted. It is safe to fish and consume fish from these waters.

Other beaches in the area are not under a beach water advisory and are safe for swimming and recreational water sports. These include Ringling Causeway, Longboat Key public access, North and South Lido, Lido Casino, Siesta Key, Nokomis, North and South

Jetty, Brohard (Paw) Park, Caspersen, Venice public beach, Venice Fishing Pier, Service Club Park, Manasota Key, and Blind Pass beaches.

Residents and visitors can visit [www.OurGulfEnvironment.net](http://www.OurGulfEnvironment.net) and click on water monitoring and then bacterial testing to check beach water testing results of area Gulf beaches, or call the Sarasota County Health Department's Environmental Health office at 941-861-6133.

**MEDIA NOTE: A news release will be issued when the advisory is lifted.**

-end-