



News Release

Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WAKE CLOSES FALLS LAKE SWIMMING AREAS DUE TO HIGH BACTERIA LEVELS

Wake County has closed two recreational swimming areas at Falls Lake: Sandling Beach and Beaverdam Beach; due to elevated levels of bacteria, based on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards. The County routinely tests recreational lakes for bacteria and when bacteria levels of E.coli exceed EPA standards, the area is closed to “primary contact recreation,” which is swimming or any activity where your head may go underwater. The County samples the lakes weekly during the summer.

“Our goal is to eliminate the potential for people to come into contact with excessive levels of bacteria, as that could result in creating illness conditions for individuals. We will continue to collect water samples on a daily basis for the closed areas and reopen the lake for swimming as soon as the bacteria levels fall within the EPA-established standards,” said Wake County Environmental Services Watershed Manager Kathryn Hobby. “After we observe two consecutive days of water samples meeting the standards, the area will be reopened for recreation.”

Acceptable levels of E.coli should not exceed 235 colony forming units (cfu) per milliliter. 1203.3 cfu per milliliter were found at Sandling Beach, and 866.4 cfu per milliliter were found at Beaverdam.

The lake is not closed to fishing and other swimming areas at Falls Lake will remain open. County staff suggests that visitors call their recreational lake facilities to find out if they are open to swimming or visit the [Wake County Recreational Waters Website](#). People are also reminded to always wash their hands with soap and water, and thoroughly shower after swimming, tubing or skiing in area lakes to reduce chances of contracting a waterborne illness.

More information on [recreational water illnesses](#) can be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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