FOR BEACHES WITH URBAN RUNOFF DURING DRY WEATHER:
As a precaution, avoid contact with runoff and recreational waters within at least 75 feet from where runoff enters ocean or bay waters during dry weather.

TO REPORT ILLEGAL DISCHARGES TO STORM DRAINS: (888) 846-0800
A General Advisory is issued after 0.2 inch or more rain is received to alert the public of potential ocean and bay water contamination by urban runoff. Bacterial levels can increase significantly during and after rainstorms in ocean and bay waters, especially near storm drain, river, and lagoon outlets. The Department of Environmental Health advises beach users to avoid contact with ocean and bay waters for at least 3 days (72 hours) after rainfall ends. While many coastal outlets (storm drains, rivers, and lagoons) within San Diego County are permanently posted with white metal warning signs, additional temporary warning signs are not posted for General Advisories.

**GENERAL (RAIN) ADVISORY FOR ALL COASTAL WATERS**

A water contact advisory/warning is issued when monitoring reveals ocean or bay water quality does not meet State standards due to high bacterial levels, or during the excavation of a coastal outlet (river or lagoon) when potentially contaminated water is released to the ocean. Beach water quality monitoring uses bacterial indicators to test for the presence of possible pathogens. The bacterial indicators are not specific to humans, and may be from other sources including wildlife, pets, soil, and rating vegetation such as kelp. Beaches impacted by bay water with elevated bacterial levels may contain human pathogens that can cause illnesses. The Department of Environmental Health & Quality advises beach users to avoid contact with ocean and bay waters where advisory/warning signs are posted. Signs are typically posted at least 50 yards (150 feet) outside of the sampling location where water quality does not meet State standards.

**RECREATIONAL WATER MONITORING PROGRAM**

Where is it safe to swim? Southern California beaches are generally clean and safe for recreation as indicated by water quality monitoring. Storm water runoff can make beaches unsuitable for swimming or surfing for at least 72 hours after a rainstorm. Beaches impacted by urban runoff from storm drains, streams and rivers should be avoided. Signs are posted warning not to swim at locations where water does not meet standards or sewage contamination has occurred.

What do we test for?

- **Total Coliform**, **Fecal Coliform** and **Enterococcus bacteria**
- **Salmonella typhi**, **Shigella dysenteriae**, and other species
- **Escherichia coli**
- **Vibrio cholerae**, **Cryptosporidium**, **Giardia lamblia**
- **Norovirus**, **Rotavirus**, **Coxsackie virus**
- **Adenovirus**, **Echovirus**
- **Hepatitis A**

What pathogens may be found in swimming waters contaminated with sewage and possibly in runoff?

What happens to bacteria/viruses/protozoa in swimming waters?

- They die-off due to sunlight (ultraviolet light), salt water exposure (osmotic forces), age, dilution, predation by other organisms.

Where are other sources of long term water quality trends available based on monitoring data?

- Visit the Heal the Bay webpage at healthebay.org and select the Beach Report Card link for annual beach water quality grades.

What beaches are currently posted?

- Visit San Diego County’s mobile website at sdbeachinfo.com or call the San Diego County Beach and Bay Status Hotline for an update of current water quality status at (619) 338-2073. For more information, go to sdbeachinfo.com on your computer, tablet or smartphone.

**WHAT PATHOGENS MAY BE FOUND IN SWIMMING WATER CONTAMINATED WITH SEWAGE AND POSSIBLY IN RUNOFF?**

**WHAT DO WE TEST FOR?**

- Total Coliform, Fecal Coliform and Enterococcus bacteria
- Salmonella, Shigella dysenteriae & other species
- Escherichia coli
- Vibrio cholerae, Cryptosporidium, Giardia lamblia
- Norovirus, Rotavirus, Coxsackie virus (some strains)
- Adenovirus, Echovirus
- hepatitis A

**WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?**

- Environment - soils, decaying vegetation
- Animal wastes - birds, dogs, cats, seals
- Storm water/urban runoff - sources vary
- Humans - sewage, kids with diapers, shedding from body

**WHAT HAPPENS TO BACTERIA/VIRUSES/PROTOZOA IN SWIMMING WATER?**

- They die-off due to sunlight (ultraviolet light), salt water exposure (osmotic forces), age, dilution, predation by other organisms.

**WHAT OTHER SOURCES OF LONG TERM WATER QUALITY TRENDS ARE AVAILABLE BASED ON MONITORING DATA?**

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**WHAT BEACHES ARE CURRENTLY POSTED?**

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