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Health advisory lifted for water contact at Harris Beach

A health advisory for contact with marine water at Harris Beach State Park in Curry County was lifted today by the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

The advisory was issued last Thursday, after water samples at Harris Beach State Park showed higher-than-normal levels of enterococcus, a type of fecal bacteria, in the marine water. Subsequent testing showed the contamination had subsided and the waters did not pose a higher-than-normal risk associated with water-contact activities.

State officials encourage recreational activities at all Oregon beaches, suggesting only that water contact be avoided when advisories are in effect.

Since 2003 state officials have used a federal Environmental Protection Agency grant to monitor popular Oregon beaches and make timely reports to the public about elevated levels of fecal bacteria. Oregon state agencies participating in this program are DHS, DEQ and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. More detailed test results are available at www.healthoregon.org/beach.