

VWMC Members:

This is Healthy and Safe Swimming Week! Please read this special set of announcements and forward it to your friends, family, and colleagues. This message is posted on the Virginia Water Monitoring Council website at <http://www.vwmc.vwrrc.vt.edu/announcements/>. Please feel free to post it on your website. If you forward this announcement or post it to your website, please let the VWMC know so that we can report it to our funder; to do so, please email: vwmc@vt.edu.

If someone forwarded this message to you, you can join the VWMC by sending your name, water-monitoring affiliation (if applicable), and contact information (email address, mailing address, and phone number) to vwmc@vt.edu.

1.) Healthy and Safe Swimming Week – May 21-27, 2018 – Theme: “Swim Healthy. Stay Healthy” -- This yearly observance is celebrated the week before Memorial Day. The event focuses on simple steps swimmers, parents of young swimmers, pool operators, and beach managers can take to help ensure healthy and safe swimming experiences for everyone:

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/observances/hss-week/index.html>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website has promotional materials (brochures, buttons & banners, fact sheets, infographics, mobile apps, podcasts, posters, social media library, stories, and videos) to educate the public on healthy swimming practices. To learn more, see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/index.html>.

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is promoting Healthy and Safe Swimming Week and is providing a media and messaging toolkit at <http://www.swimhealthyva.com>. A statewide press release is available at

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/news/2018-news-releases/virginia-department-of-health-encourages-everyone-to-swim-healthy-stay-healthy/>.

2.) Beach Monitoring in Virginia -- Bacteria levels in coastal beach water are monitored weekly at 46 public beaches on the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean of Virginia during the swimming season (May-September).

Water samples are collected weekly by Local Health Departments and analyzed by local laboratories for enterococci bacteria. If bacteria levels exceed Virginia's Water Quality Standard of 104 colony forming units (cfu)/100 mL of water, a swimming advisory is issued. Enterococci bacteria serve as an indicator for fecal contamination in salt and brackish waters. These organisms are not harmful themselves, but indicate that other potentially harmful organisms may be present. High levels of enterococci bacteria indicate an increased health risk to recreational water users.

Follow VDH's Beach Monitoring Program on Twitter to receive a notification for

swimming advisories <https://twitter.com/VDHBeach>.

For information about current swimming advisories and monitored beaches, beach advisory and monitoring data, links to local beaches, local health department contacts, special projects, and the Coastal Beach Monitoring brochure visit:

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/beach-monitoring/>.

3.) "Beaches and Bacteria" – This article was updated in January 2014 and is available at <http://vawatercentralnewsgrouper.wordpress.com/2014/01/29/beaches-and-bacteria-january-2014-update-of-an-august-2004-virginia-water-central-article/>. It was first published by the Virginia Water Resources Research Center in *Virginia Water Central* (August 2004). The article describes:

- The difference between a beach advisory and a beach closure
- The Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act
- The types of indicator organisms monitored at Virginia's beaches
- Virginia's bacteria standards
- Microbial Source Tracking

4.) "Safely Enjoying Virginia's Natural Waters" -- This brochure, published by the Virginia Department of Health, covers topics such as:

- What organisms are in natural waters and where do they come from?
- What are the health risks and how are they determined?
- Why avoid natural water after a heavy rain?
- What you can do to protect yourself.

Go to http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2016/04/Safely-Enjoy-Natural-Waters_v2.pdf to download a PDF document of the brochure.

5.) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention -- Healthy Swimming & Recreational Water web page: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/> -- Provides information for all individuals involved in a healthy and safe swimming experience

- **Swimmers**
 - Health Benefits of Water-based Exercise
 - How to Swim Healthy
 - Recreational Water Illnesses
 - Drowning, Injury, & Sun Protection
 - State-based Healthy Swimming Information
- **Residential Pool or Hot Tub Owners**
 - Disinfection & Testing
 - Cleaning and Remediation
 - Animals & Pools
- **Aquatics Professionals**
 - Design & Construction
 - Operation & Maintenance

- Policies & Management
- Regulation & Inspection
- Model Aquatic Health Code
- **Medical Professionals**
 - Training & Patient Education
 - Infection Control
- **Public Health Professionals**
 - Public Aquatic Facility Inspections
- **Natación Saludable -- Información en Español**

This special set of announcements is sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the Virginia Department of Health as a grant to the Virginia Water Monitoring Council. To learn more about the Council, see our website at <http://www.VirginiaWMC.org>. If you have water-monitoring related news of regional or statewide interest, send it to vwmc@vt.edu and ask that it be distributed to the VWMC membership.

Tax-deductible contributions can be made to the VWMC to support information updates and other VWMC activities. Make checks payable to: "The Virginia Tech Foundation" and on the memo portion of the check include "VWMC Fund #872802." Mail contributions to the Virginia Water Resources Research Center (0444, Attn: Jane Walker) at 210 Cheatham Hall, Virginia Tech; 310 West Campus Drive; Blacksburg, VA 24061.