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Door County Public Health Department News Release— Flooding #3: Surface Water

Recreational Water Use after Flooding

After heavy rain and flooding, beaches and other recreational waters can become polluted by sewage, animal wastes, petroleum products, fertilizers and other contaminants. These wastes can be transferred into lakes and ponds via storm water drainage systems, creeks, rivers and run-off from paved surfaces.

Excessive rain can cause a substantial increase in flow to a wastewater treatment facility, resulting in an overflow or bypass of untreated or partially treated wastewater to the environment. Sewer lines can also break or overflow during excessive rainfall. Private septic systems may be compromised during heavy rain, which will also result in the introduction of human waste to surface water.

Foreign objects which can cause puncture wounds and cuts might wash into surface water.

Avoid swimming or other contact with surface water until sufficient time has passed after the event for water levels to return to normal. This may take anywhere from 24 hours to several days. As a precaution, the Door County Public Health Department has posted beaches in affected areas with Closed or Advisory Signs.

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