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Precautionary health advisory lifted for the north and central Oregon coast beaches

A health advisory for contact with marine water along Oregon's north and central coast was lifted today by the Oregon Department of Human Services, in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

The advisory was issued Jan. 8, 2009, after recent wind and rain storms. Increased pathogen and fecal bacteria levels in ocean waters can come from both shore and inland sources, including storm water runoff and sewer overflows. Subsequent monitoring shows the concerns about contamination have subsided and the waters do 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. State agencies participating in this program are the Oregon Department of Human Services, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. More detailed test results are available at www.healthoregon.org/beach.