



Manitoba's Clean Beach Program encourages you to take a few simple steps to help protect our beautiful beaches.

Protect Yourself and Other Bathers

The following personal hygiene tips are recommended:

- Wash your hands before handling food. The simple action of washing your hands before touching food will reduce your risk of ingesting harmful organisms that may be on the beach.
- Avoid swallowing lake water when playing or swimming.
- Stay away from the water if you are experiencing digestive or intestinal problems.

Protect the Beach

The following beach hygiene tips will help keep our beaches clean:

- Don't feed the shore birds. Gulls can quickly become accustomed to eating and residing on the beach.
- Don't litter or discard food on the beach. Dispose of trash in proper receptacles.
- Please clean up after your pet. Pets are not allowed on provincial park beaches and on most beaches in rural municipalities.
- Never bury waste in the sand.

The Manitoba Clean Beaches Program

To protect Manitoba's lakes and beaches, Manitoba Water Stewardship in conjunction with Manitoba Health, has developed the Clean Beaches Program. Its purpose is to reduce your health risks and to keep our province's recreational waters clean.

As part of this program, the majority of the province's most popular beaches will be monitored regularly. The results of these tests will be posted on the government's webpage on a regular basis.

The Manitoba Government has introduced a number of initiatives to protect and improve the quality of water in our lakes.

To keep informed, visit Manitoba Water Stewardship's website at

www.manitoba.ca/waterstewardship

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Manitoba Water Stewardship

Manitoba's Clean Beaches Program



Keeping Manitoba's Beaches Clean

Manitoba is fortunate to have over 100,000 fresh-water lakes and many hundreds of kilometres of world-class beaches. Vacationing at these beautiful lakes has become a way of life for both Manitobans and visitors. In addition, our lakes support a vibrant fishing industry and sustain many communities throughout the province.

The Manitoba Government has introduced a number of initiatives to protect and improve the quality of water in these lakes for the enjoyment of Manitobans long into the future. Some of these initiatives include the establishment of the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board, the introduction of an ecologically sensitive areas tax credit, new regulations to restrict waste on or near water bodies, new resources to monitor drinking water, extension of programming in agriculture aimed at protecting water courses and the introduction of a new *Water Protection Act*.



In addition to these programs, the Manitoba government is also working with municipalities, local communities and individuals so that everyone can play a role in maintaining the quality of our beautiful lakes and beaches. Protecting and maintaining this valuable resource is a responsibility we all share. One way you can help is to follow the steps in this brochure to keep our beaches clean.

What is E. coli bacteria?

Escherichia coli or E. coli is a bacteria found in large numbers in all warm-blooded animals including humans, livestock, wildlife and birds. This bacteria itself generally does not cause illness, but when present in large numbers, the risk is elevated of becoming ill from other organisms.

The most common illnesses contracted by bathers are infections of the eyes, ears, nose, and throat as well as stomach upsets. Typical symptoms include mild fever, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach cramps.

How does E. coli get into the water?

Escherichia coli is present in the environment in high numbers. They can be contributed to water by runoff from park, urban, and agricultural lands, malfunctioning wastewater treatment systems, and by wildlife and birds.

Recent research from Lake Winnipeg has shown that large numbers of E. coli bacteria are present in the wet sand of beaches. This research has shown that during some periods of high winds when water levels are rising in the south basin, these bacteria can be washed out of the wet sand and into the swimming area of the lake.



This research has also shown that less than 10 per cent of the E. coli at Lake Winnipeg beaches is from human sources with the remaining numbers being from birds and animals.

Where can I find the latest test results?

The Manitoba government is committed to regularly testing beaches for E. coli and reporting the results to the public.

Test results for Lake Winnipeg beaches can be found at: www.manitoba.ca/lakewinnipeg while data for other beaches can be viewed at www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/watres/wq_beach_data.html.

Thank you for participating in the Manitoba Clean Beaches Program

