



**Ohio Department of Health**  
246 North High Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
www.odh.ohio.gov

*Bob Taft, Governor*  
*J. Nick Baird M.D., Director*

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# ADVISORY

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Office of Public Affairs • (614) 644-8562  
Jay Carey, Director

For Immediate Release  
June 3, 2005

## **BEACH INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE AND OVER THE PHONE**

COLUMBUS – In 2005, Ohioans have two ways to learn whether warning signs are posted at their favorite beach.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Bathing Beach Monitoring Program information line – 1-866-OHIO-BCH (644-6224) – will help swimmers learn about conditions at 88 public beaches in Ohio. ODH samples these beaches in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, local health departments and public and private organizations along the Lake Erie shoreline. Sample results are also available online at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/ODHPrograms/BEACH/beachmain.htm>.

If *E. coli* bacteria levels exceed state standards, ODH recommends the posting of signs to inform beachgoers of conditions that may make it unsafe for some to swim. The signs read: “Water Quality Advisory – Bacterial levels here currently exceed state standards. Children, the elderly and those in ill health are advised not to swim.”

Gastroenteritis is the most common illness associated with swimming in polluted water. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, cramps, fever, headache and diarrhea. Swimmers can reduce their chances of getting sick by steering clear of visible discharge pipes; keeping their head and face out of the water; not swallowing the water; showering after swimming; and waiting 24 hours after a heavy rainfall before swimming.

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**Contact: Ohio Department of Health - Office of Public Affairs (614) 644-8562**