

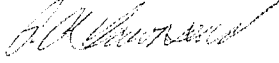


PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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North West Community Council
August 14, 2008

12th

TO: Chair and Members of North West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
for Cathie O'Toole, Director, Infrastructure and Asset Management

DATE: July 24, 2008

SUBJECT: Springfield Lake Beach Closure

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Report Item 11.6 - July 10 North West Community Council meeting.

BACKGROUND

At the July 10, 2008 meeting of the North West Community Council, it was requested by Community Council that staff report on the reasons for the high level bacteria counts in Springfield Lake that resulted in the beach closure so early in the season and a comparison of data with other HRM beaches that have also been closed for similar reasons.

DISCUSSION

Bacteria levels observed in lakes vary naturally throughout the year for a variety of reasons. The amount of bacteria in streams that feed lakes typically increase early in the year until early summer, followed by a decline through October. It is to be expected that bacteria levels at the beaches follow a similar trend.

There are several possible sources of bacteria entering urban lakes, including the malfunction or failure of septic and/or sewage systems, polluted storm-water runoff, animal wastes, boating wastes and waterfowl. Water sample analysis is only able to identify the quantity of fecal coliforms, but not their source. Therefore we can not be certain about the exact cause of the high counts.

Staff at Halifax Water have confirmed that there are no known leakages, spills, or other contribution or sewage matter into the lake or anywhere in its vicinity in recent weeks. This makes it more likely that waterfowl droppings or pet waste are to blame.

Bacteria levels in lakes typically climb in summer months; in periods with low rainfall, the lakes flush out more slowly, allowing bacteria levels to climb. These levels typically spike shortly after a heavy rainfall because surface runoff carries with it any coliforms resident in the immediate watershed.

To date, three HRM beaches have been closed due to high bacteria levels in 2008: Springfield Lake Beach, Lake Banook, and Penhorn Lake. The closure and subsequent re-opening dates for these beaches from 2004-2008 is given below.

	Springfield Lake Beach	Birch Cove Beach (Lake Banook)	Penhorn Lake
2008	Closure: July 9 Reopening: July 18	Closure: July 10 Reopening: July 24	Closure: June 24 Reopening: July 4
2007	Closure: June 27 Reopening: July 12; 2 nd Closure: August 8 2 nd Reopening: August 24	n/a	n/a
2006	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005	n/a	n/a	Closure: August 30
2004	Closure: August 4 Reopening: August 11	n/a	n/a

Table 1. Closures of Selected HRM Beaches from 2004-2008.

Recent records show that the Springfield Lake Beach has seen similar closures in 2004 & 2007, particularly when weather conditions are warmer and drier. It is anticipated that the beach will

reopen after some rain events and a drop from the daily maximum temperatures witnessed early July.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

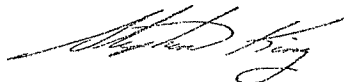
This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments to this report.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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