

# Water quality swimming alerts lifted for two sound-side sites in Carteret County

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**MOREHEAD CITY** – State recreational water quality officials today lifted two water quality swimming alerts at a sound-side sites in Carteret County.

Subsequent sampling of the sites show that bacteria levels have dropped below the state's and Environmental Protection Agency's standards set for swimming and water play.

The alerts were for waters at two sites near Beaufort. The first was at the Radio Island public beach access off Marine Drive and the other was at the north side of the mouth of Town Creek. Test results of water samples taken on April 15, showed bacteria levels at the sites had exceeded the single-sample maximum standard of 104 enterococci per 100 milliliters of water for Tier 1 high-usage sites. Subsequent testing of water samples taken on April 16 showed the bacteria levels have fallen below the safe swimming standard.

Enterococci, the bacteria group used for testing, are found in the intestines of warm-blooded animals. While it is not known to cause illness, scientific studies indicate that enterococci may indicate the presence of other disease-causing organisms. People swimming or playing in waters with bacteria levels higher than the standards have an increased risk of developing gastrointestinal illness or skin infections.

Coastal recreational waters in North Carolina are generally clean. However, it is important to continue monitoring them, so the public can be informed of any localized problems. The N.C. Recreational Water Quality Program samples 209 sites in coastal waters of the state, most of them on a weekly basis from April through October.