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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Okaloosa County Saltwater Beach Monitoring Results For December 13, 2010

The Okaloosa County Health Department has been conducting saltwater beach water quality monitoring at 12 sites once every two weeks since July 31, 2000 and weekly since August 2002, through the Healthy Beaches Monitoring Program. The water samples are analyzed for enteric bacteria (both fecal coliform and enterococci), that normally inhabit the intestinal tract of humans and animals and which may cause human disease, infections, or rashes. The presence of enteric bacteria is an indication of fecal pollution, which may come from stormwater runoff, pets and wildlife, and human sewage. The purpose of the Healthy Beaches Monitoring Program is to determine whether Florida has significant beach water quality problems.

| Site | Name | City | Fecal Coliform | Water Quality | Enterococci | Water Quality | Enterococci Geometric Mean | Water Quality |
|-------|--|------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| SP-1 | Liza Jackson Park | Ft. Walton Beach | 7 | Good | 8 | Good | 8.17 | Good |
| SP-2 | Garniers Park | Ft. Walton Beach | 38 | Good | 27 | Good | 56.41 | Poor |
| SP-3 | Marler Park | Okaloosa Island | 2 | Good | 3 | Good | 3.47 | Good |
| SP-4 | Wayside Park | Okaloosa Island | 34 | Good | 19 | Good | 3.82 | Good |
| SP-5 | Poquito Park | Shalimar | 3 | Good | 3 | Good | 2.29 | Good |
| SP-6 | Gulf Islands National Seashore | Okaloosa Island | 1 | Good | 1 | Good | 1.82 | Good |
| SP-7 | East Pass | Okaloosa Island | 1 | Good | 3 | Good | 1.89 | Good |
| SP-8 | Lincoln Park | Valparaiso | 4 | Good | 1 | Good | 1.97 | Good |
| SP-9 | Henderson Park Beach | Destin | 2 | Good | 1 | Good | 1.00 | Good |
| SP-10 | Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park | Niceville | 5 | Good | 1 | Good | 2.86 | Good |
| SP-11 | James Lee Park | Destin | 1 | Good | 1 | Good | 1.58 | Good |
| SP-12 | Camp Timpoochee | Niceville | 2 | Good | 1 | Good | 2.46 | Good |

Water quality classifications are based upon:

1. Florida Department of Environmental Protections (FDEP's) adopted Criteria for Surface Water Quality Classifications (Chapter 62-302.530, Florida Administrative Code), which establishes a fecal coliform standard greater than or equal to 400 colony forming units per 100 milliliters for 10% of the samples; and
2. United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) recommended standard for enterococci of greater than or equal to 104 colony forming units per 100 milliliters of marine water, or a geometric mean of the five most current weekly samples of greater than 35 colony forming units per 100 milliliters of marine water.

An advisory has been issued for Garniers Park of Fort Walton Beach based on the enterococci geometric mean standards recommended by the EPA. This should be considered a potential health risk to the bathing public.

Bacteria counts often come back high during or after a rainfall event.

If you have any questions, please contact the Okaloosa County Health Department at (850) 833-9247 or (850) 689-7859, or visit the Department of Health's Internet Beach Water Quality website www.doh.state.fl.us, click on "Floridians and Visitors" - under "Food, Water, Air, Land" choose "Beach Water Quality". You can also visit www.HealthyOkaloosa.com, and click the "Healthy Beaches" link to be taken to a list of the Okaloosa County 'Healthy Beaches' sites and maps.

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