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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Okaloosa County Saltwater Beach Monitoring Results For March 27, 2012

The Okaloosa County Health Department conducts weekly saltwater beach water quality monitoring at 12 sites 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	16	Good	4	Good	44.02	Poor
SP-2	Garniers Park	Ft. Walton Beach	68	Good	40	Moderate	124.65	Poor
SP-3	Marler Park	Okaloosa Island	16	Good	4	Good	26.66	Good
SP-4	Wayside Park	Okaloosa Island	64	Good	20	Good	25.96	Good
SP-5	Poquito Park	Shalimar	4	Good	32	Good	88.94	Poor
SP-6	Gulf Islands National Seashore	Okaloosa Island	20	Good	12	Good	27.65	Good
SP-7	East Pass	Okaloosa Island	8	Good	4	Good	41.68	Poor
SP-8	Lincoln Park	Valparaiso	16	Good	176	Poor	61.54	Poor
SP-9	Henderson Park Beach	Destin	4	Good	20	Good	12.35	Good
SP-10	Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park	Niceville	64	Good	24	Good	53.57	Poor
SP-11	James Lee Park	Destin	24	Good	36	Moderate	19.27	Good
SP-12	Camp Timpoochee	Niceville	4	Good	24	Good	33.27	Good

Water quality classifications are based upon:

1. Florida's Department of Environmental Protections (FDEP) 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 **Lincoln Park** of Valparaiso, based on the enterococci standard and the geometric mean standard recommended by the EPA. This should be considered a potential health risk to the bathing public.

Advisories have been issued for **Garniers Park** and **Liza Jackson Park** of Ft. Walton Beach, **East Pass** of Okaloosa Island, **Poquito Park** of Shalimar, **Lincoln Park** of Valparaiso, and for **Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park** of Niceville -- based on the geometric mean standard 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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