

# 2020 RECREATIONAL BEACH MONITORING FOR KENAI BEACHES

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KENAI, AK — The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has announced the start of the 8th year of bacteria monitoring at Kenai North and Kenai South beaches. Water quality samples will be collected weekly at the two beach sites. Water quality samples will also be collected upstream and downstream of the nearby gull rookery and at the Warren Ames Memorial Bridge.

The Kenai Beach program is part of a statewide program which monitors bacteria levels at Alaska beaches May through September. Water samples are collected weekly starting May 25, and results are posted on the DEC BEACH webpage later that week. The program evaluates potential health risks indicated by fecal coliform and enterococci bacteria and notifies the public when bacteria levels exceed state standards. Based on bacteria source testing, seagulls and other birds are known to be a significant source of fecal waste on Kenai River beaches.

DEC's key message to the public is to reduce things that attract birds by properly disposing of fish waste and picking up trash off the beach.

Beach goers can stay informed on the [DEC Beach Program web page](#), where they will find answers to questions like: Which beaches have elevated bacteria levels? When was the last sample? How can I keep Kenai beaches clean while recreating? How can I protect my health while dipnetting?

The DEC BEACH Program website has an at-a-glance interactive map showing beach monitoring locations. You can sign up for the new [list serve](#) to get updates sent directly to you. You can also view past monitoring reports, and press releases.

DEC posts weekly updates on the [DEC Facebook page](#), and is working with Anchorage, Mat-Su, and local radio stations to inform dipnetters to "Keep the Kenai Clean!" and to check the [DEC BEACH web page](#) for current water quality information and recommendations on keeping healthy while visiting Kenai beaches.

The DEC BEACH Program is part of a nationwide effort to decrease the incidence of water-borne illnesses at public beaches under the federal Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act. Water samples have been collected by the Kenai Watershed Forum at Kenai beaches since 2010. Protect your health and help keep our beaches clean this summer!