



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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N.C. officials urge caution for recreational water users after storms cause flooding, sewer overflows

RALEIGH – The Division of Water Resources urges caution for people recreating in rivers, lakes and other natural water bodies after statewide storm events resulted in localized flooding and contributed to sewer collection system overflows in several communities from the mountains to the coast.

In the Asheville area, significant rainfall contributed to reported sewer collection system overflows of 8,500 gallons near Oxford Court and 5,500 gallons near Riverside Drive. A bypass of partially treated wastewater reported at the Buncombe County Metropolitan Sewerage District wastewater treatment plant prompted staff in the N.C. Division of Water Resources to start sampling the French Broad River to determine current bacteria levels. Local health departments in the Asheville area have been notified of the release of the partially treated wastewater. The state agency will send the local health departments bacteria sample results when those are available.

Across the state in the Fayetteville area, five inches of rain in 90 minutes caused massive flooding and resulted in water levels as high as car door handles in some parking lots, and impassible roadways across the city. The Public Works Commission of Fayetteville reported an 800,000 gallon sewer system overflow near Raeford Road that ended up draining to the Cape Fear River.

Nearby Harnett County reported a sewer system overflow of more than 45,000 gallons near its Eastside Lift Station. Other significant sewer system issues were reported in Catawba, Mecklenburg Wilson, Pitt and Person counties.

Bacteria and other pollutants may be present in surface water bodies from numerous sources with any large rainfall event, and the public should always use discretion when recreating in natural bodies of waters. Boaters and swimmers should stay out of areas where discolored water or dead fish are present; limit direct contact with water if you have cuts, skin rashes or aren't feeling well; and wash with soap and clean water afterwards.

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