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MEDIA RELEASE

**PRECAUTIONARY BEACH ADVISORY POSTED
AT FOUR CHARLOTTE COUNTY BEACHES.**

High levels of bacteria prompt beach advisory signs to be posted.

Port Charlotte (FL) -The Florida Department of Health (DOH) Charlotte County Health Department is issuing a precautionary beach advisory due to high bacteria levels at Englewood Beach, Palm Island North (Night Island), Port Charlotte Beach Complex and Boca Grande. These areas should be considered a potential health risk to the bathing public. The presence of enteric bacteria is an indication of fecal pollution, which may come from storm water runoff, pets, wildlife and human sewage. If high concentrations of enteric bacteria are ingested or enter through an open cut or sore, they may cause human disease or infection. The most common symptoms include rashes, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting.

Charlotte County Health Department participates in the Florida Healthy Beaches Monitoring Program. The Healthy Beaches Program involves the monitoring of salt or brackish water beaches. Health advisories are issued if beach waters fail to meet required water quality standards. Signs placed near the beach read: "This Beach Monitored as Part of the Healthy Beaches Program – ADVISORY - High Bacteria Levels - Swimming NOT Recommended - Increased Risk of Illness at This Time." Signs will remain posted until bacteria levels have been determined to be acceptable by standards set forth by US Environmental Protection Agency.

Samples will be taken again and when results are known to be free of bacterial contamination the precautionary advisory will be lifted. DOH promotes and protects the health and safety of all people in Florida through the delivery of quality public health services and the promotion of health care standards. For more information about DOH programs such as the Florida Healthy Beaches Program please visit the Department of Health's web site at www.doh.state.fl.us and choose beach water quality under the A-Z topics list, or visit www.CharlotteCHD.com.

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