

310.2.E **Nude bathing** – There are no Vermont State laws prohibiting nude bathing. *If* you are confronted with a situation in which nudity at the beach is a problem, follow this procedure:

- **Nudity by children** – Request the parent to clothe the child *if* it appears the circumstance so warrants. Accompany the request with an explanation that it is in the interest of child safety, since clothing protects sensitive areas of the body.
 - **Nudity by non-toilet trained children can also contribute to increased bacteria levels in the water. For this reason alone intervention is recommended to protect the water quality from unintended fecal contamination.**
- **Nudity by adults** – Request they cover themselves appropriately. If they fail to cooperate, call the police.

310.2.F **Other swimming area restrictions/rules** have to do with public safety.

- **Swim Water Testing and monitoring for Blue Green Algae** is performed weekly by a member of the Park Staff. For more information on this please refer to *Appendix 930: Staffing and Helpful Hints: “Swim Water Sampling Fact Sheet”*.
- **Glass containers** and other materials which could pose a hazard to swimmers are not allowed on beaches or in swimming areas.
- **Fishing** is not allowed in designated swimming areas.
- **Using soap** is not allowed in any surface waters in or adjacent to state parks.
- **Swimming diapers** are recommended to reduce the potential from unintended fecal contamination of the swim water by children who are not toilet trained

310.2.G **Monitoring and Beach Closures:**

BACTERIA

Swim water samples for analysis of *E. coli*. bacteria shall be taken at all Vermont State Parks designated open swim areas.

- Swim water shall be tested from that park’s opening to Closure.
- Samples shall be taken once per week.
- For smaller areas, one sample per swim area shall be taken (The sample should be taken at the location of greatest swimmer use.) For larger areas, multiple samples shall be taken at locations designated by Regional staff.
 - Samples and necessary resamples shall be taken from the same location each week
- Samples shall be taken in the morning, Monday or Tuesday of each week (Depending on lab schedule).
- The sample shall be taken in water at least 2 feet deep.
- Sterile containers provided by the analyzing laboratory shall be used to collect sample.

- Results will be returned to designated FPR employee from the laboratory the following day

Beach Closures for Bacteria

The decision to close a beach to swimming due to elevated test results for bacteria will be made and communicated from the regional level. If regional management staff cannot be reached you may be contacted by the Park Central Office. There is standard signage that will be provided by the regional staff.

A beach closure is not a park closure, but a measure taken to protect our visitor from potential exposure to pathogens from swimming. Because of timing of results and current testing methods, it can be difficult for the visitor to understand why the water is deemed suitable one hour and unsuitable the next.

The best approach is to reassure the visitor that these are measures that follow Vermont Health Department protocol and are intended to protect the health of the visiting public. The standards are conservative by design, and the testing indicates potential for risk not absolute levels.

Be comforted that closures are rare and most park beaches re-open after the first re-test.

CYANOBACTERIA (Blue Green Algae)

Vermont State Parks Cyanobacteria (Blue Green Algae) Guidance

The following guidance is meant for State Parks with recreational waters known to be a moderate to high risk for Cyanobacteria blooms. Lake Champlain, Lake Carmi and Elmore are the only recreational waterbodies that have historically experienced Cyanobacteria blooms in the State Park System.

Education:

Park Managers who manage designated access to recreational waters known to be moderate to high risk for Cyanobacteria blooms shall complete a Cyanobacteria identification and reporting training each year by the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) or the Lake Champlain Committee (LCC). This training shall be coordinated regionally and shall be required of staff who will be monitoring and reporting Cyanobacteria activity.

Monitoring:

Recreational waters with a historical record of blooms shall be monitored on a consistent basis. At the beginning of summer, a visual assessment should be done weekly. As summer progresses and recreational waters begin to warm, visual assessments should be completed daily. During active blooms, blooms shall be visually assessed several times a day, as necessary.

Reporting:

There are two types required reporting:

1. Visual assessment reports shall be reported once weekly through the VDH website as instructed at the required training. As bloom activities increase, supplemental reports shall be submitted through the VDH website as necessary based upon bloom category.
2. Bloom activity requiring potential or required swim area closures shall be reported to your Regional Supervisor and Regional Manager immediately.

Swim Area Closure Procedure:

Swim areas impacted by a Category 3 bloom shall be closed and not re-opened until a cyanobacteria sample has been analyzed for presence of toxins. If a Category 3 bloom occurs at your facility, complete the following steps:

1. Report the condition to your regional management team immediately. This will ensure the closure shall be posted on our website: <http://vtstateparks.com/htm/swimming.htm>
2. Post VDH swim area closure signage around the impacted area. This may not be the entire swim area. Remember, the park shall remain open during the swim area closure. Park entry fees will not be waived during a closure.
3. Submit a supplementary report of the condition through the VDH website.
4. Communicate the bloom and beach closure status to your regional coordinator.
5. Monitor the bloom consistently throughout the day for changes. Once the bloom begins to dissipate, a sample shall be taken for analysis. If a bloom dissipates late on a Friday afternoon or during the weekend (when VDH labs are closed), the swim area shall remain closed throughout the weekend and the sample should be taken on Monday morning.
6. Toxin reporting results shall be communicated to the Regional Coordinator who will report the results to the Park Manager, Regional Supervisor and Regional Manager and Central Office. If the results are negative for toxins, the beach shall be reopened as long as bloom conditions of a Category 3 have not redeveloped. If toxins were detected, the beach shall remain closed and a resample shall be submitted as necessary.

Additional Resources:

http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/bg_algae/documents/BGA_guide.pdf