



American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency

PRESS RELEASE: BEACH ADVISORY

Release Date: **January 20, 2016**

Contact: AS-EPA Water Program at (684) 633-2304

The American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency (AS-EPA) advises the public that on **January 19, 2016** the following recreational beaches tested positive for Enterococci bacteria levels that exceed AS-EPA Water Quality Standards:

East:

Fagasa-Fagalea
Fagasa-Fagatele
Aua Stream
Afono
Vatia
Lauli'i Stream
Alega Stream
Masefau Stream
Aoa

West:

Asili Stream

The presence of Enterococci in the water indicates contamination by human and/or animal wastes. Enterococci bacteria reside in the intestines of warm-blooded animals. Swimming in water with high levels of Enterococci can cause stomach problems, skin rashes, and ear, eye, and wound infections. To reduce your risk: avoid swallowing beach water, be sure to rinse or towel off after a swim and shower once at home. AS-EPA also advises the public to consult a physician before making any water contact if you are sick or have open wounds. Any sickness or open wounds can increase your chances of developing an infection or severe illness.

AS-EPA beach advisories inform the public about current water conditions. When a beach advisory is issued, it is most often because water samples indicate that harmful bacteria, viruses, protozoa, or parasites are likely present in the water. This advisory is in effect until further sampling and laboratory analyses indicate that Enterococci concentrations are within acceptable water quality standards. In the event of a public health hazard (ex: sewage line break or other high-risk contamination source), AS-EPA will issue a beach closure notice and will notify the public once the beach is safe again for swimming.

Note: AS-EPA monitors the water quality of 44 recreational beaches on Tutuila, the wharf in Aunu'u, and five beaches on Manu'a. Tutuila advisories are issued weekly on Wednesdays. Aunu'u and Manu'a advisories are issued monthly. Advisories are issued when bacteria concentrations exceed levels determined safe for human exposure. Should you have any questions, please contact the AS-EPA Water Program at 633-2304.

Thank you,

Ameko Pato, AS-EPA Director