

Our File/N/Réf.           **03-07-98-0171**  
 Your File/V/Réf.

DATE                        6 February 1998

TO/DEST.                 Co-ordinator,  
                               Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP.                Medical Officer of Health

SUBJECT/OBJET           **RESPONSE TO OUTSTANDING MOTION NO. CSC 23(97):  
 1997 RECREATIONAL WATER RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Community Services Committee and Council receive this report for information.**

**BACKGROUND**

At the meeting of 05 June 1997, the Committee gave the following direction to staff;

**That staff investigate more timely testing procedures for water quality at recreational beaches in the urban area (Britannia, Mooney's Bay and Westboro) and for other measures to ensure public safety.**

In response to this direction the Department has investigated with the Ministry of Health Laboratory, the National Research Council and the University of Ottawa the availability of more rapid testing procedures for E.coli bacteria. All report that there is currently no faster method of quantifying the presence of E.coli in water samples. The 24 hour turn around time provided by the Provincial Laboratory is the best currently available.

In order to ensure public safety, the Health Department has recommended the closure of Britannia and Westboro beaches for 24 hours following a rainfall in excess of 10 mm. In addition Environment and Transportation Surface Water Quality Branch, in co-operation with the City of Ottawa, is conducting a survey over the summer to attempt to identify factors other than rainfall which may help predict water quality and also identify potential contributors to pollution at Britannia Beach.

Finally, the City of Ottawa will be installing "gull nets" over a section of the beach, as a pilot project to determine their efficiency in improving water quality.

A report regarding their findings will be available in the fall or winter of 1997 after the data collected have been analysed.

*Approved by  
Dr. Robert Cushman*