



Public Health Administration

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CDC Confirms Dangerous E. coli O157 in Big Chico Creek — No-Swim Advisory Remains in Effect

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. – Butte County Public Health (BCPH) has received lab results from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirming the presence of E. coli O157 in multiple locations along Big Chico Creek. The samples, collected on July 17 and July 24, match the same strain that sickened and hospitalized several children earlier this summer. BCPH urges the public to continue following all no-swim advisories for the creek until further notice.

“This is not your average creek bacteria – this is a new and dangerous strain of E. Coli that continues to be found in the creek this summer,” said Butte County Public Health Officer Dr. Jarett Beaudoin. “If you’ve been thinking about taking a swim in the creek, please don’t.”

Since the no-swim advisory was issued on July 18, BCPH has not received any new reports of waterborne illnesses linked to the creek.

CDC Findings

Preliminary CDC findings suggest the E. coli O157 contamination likely came from grazing animals or birds, though the exact species has not yet been identified. For this strain of E. coli O157, it is very unlikely that the contamination came from human fecal matter.

Next Steps

The CDC has recommended further investigation of the creek system to pinpoint the source(s) of E. coli O157 contamination and explore possible solutions. BCPH is continuing to investigate other potential sources and is actively consulting with subject matter experts to determine next steps. Updates will continue to be shared in a timely manner as BCPH works to ensure the safety of this beloved waterway.

This investigation may take several months, and the no-swim advisory will likely be in place for the entire season.

E. coli O157 is a dangerous variant that can cause severe illness, hospitalization, and in some cases, kidney failure.

- For more information on E. coli, visit: www.cdc.gov/ecoli/about/index.html
- For updates on the Big Chico Creek advisory, visit: www.buttecounty.net/610/publichealth

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