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## **News Release**

Issued: July 6, 2017  
For Immediate Release

Contact: Michael Cramer  
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### **Water Quality/Swimming Alert Issued**

**CAROLINA BEACH, NC** – State recreational water quality officials today are alerting the public that initial testing at an ocean-side site in New Hanover County showed levels of bacteria exceeding the state and Environmental Protection Agency’s recreational water quality swimming standards.

The alert affects waters at the public beach access at Hamlet Avenue in Carolina Beach. Samples collected yesterday show test results of 324 enterococci per 100 milliliters of water, which exceeds the state and federal single-sample standard of 104 enterococci per 100 milliliters for Tier 1 high usage sites. Swimming areas are classified based on recreational use and are referred to as tiers.

State officials will test the site again today, and the results of the sampling will dictate further action. If the new samples also show elevated bacteria counts, state officials will post a swimming advisory sign and issue a swimming advisory.

The N.C. Recreational Water Quality Program tests water quality at ocean and sound beaches in accordance with federal and state laws.

Enterococci, the bacteria group used for testing, are found in the intestines of warm-blooded animals. While it does not cause illness, scientific studies indicate that enterococci may indicate the presence of other disease-causing organisms. People swimming or playing in waters with bacteria levels higher than the standards have an increased risk of developing gastrointestinal illness or skin infections.

State officials sample 204 sites throughout the coastal region, most of them on a weekly basis from April to October. Testing continues on a reduced schedule during the rest of the year, when the waters are colder.

If you have questions regarding this notice, please contact Erin Bryan-Millush with the Division of Marine Fisheries, Recreational Water Quality Section at 252-808-8153, or Carolina Beach Town Manager Michael Cramer at 910-458-2994.