

For Immediate Release:

Wednesday April 28, 2010 3:30pm

From: The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

Contact: Rebecca Burns, Director of Environmental Health 269-273-2161 Ext. 228

RE: Sewage discharge advisory. St. Joseph River South of the Broadway Street Bridge, Three Rivers, Michigan

"No Contact" Health Advisory Issued

St. Joseph County, Michigan:

Officials of the Three Rivers Clean Water Plant have notified the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency (CHA), that the treated sewage effluent being discharged into the St. Joseph River exceeds the expected fecal coliform count. The fecal coliform count in the sample read today was 6200 counts per 100 ml. The elevated fecal coliform count is the result of a loss of chlorine to the system that occurred sometime after Monday, April 26th when the last acceptable sample result was obtained.

Action taken. As a precaution, and in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environmental, the Three Rivers Clean water plant has been working with the CHA, and chlorination is expected to resume on April 29, 2010 which will again provide proper chlorination of the effluent. Persons are advised to avoid any body contact with the St. Joseph River downstream from the Broadway Street Bridge. This advisory includes any body contact with the river for activities such as swimming, canoeing or fishing. The advisory is in affect until April 30, 2010 unless further action is required.

Numerous infectious diseases are associated with contact with fecal coliform and this advisory has been issued as a precautionary measure to protect the public's health.

Future Action. The CHA is currently notifying local newspapers, radio stations and providing information via the internet to get the word out to citizens as rapidly as possible about this advisory. The health agency will continue to monitor this situation until conditions return to normal.

This release as well as a **frequently Asked Questions** guide regarding fecal coliform will be posted on the CHA website at:

www.bhsj.org/faqs