

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

June 21, 2011

**Rebecca Burns,
Environmental Health Director
269-273-2161, ext. 228
Theresa Christner, Health Ed./Health Promotion Dir.
517-279-9561, ext. 144**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**“No Contact” Health Advisory Issued
Sewage Discharge Advisory for St. Joseph River
West of the John Street Lift Station to the Union Lake Dam**

Union City, Michigan. Officials of the Village of Union City’s Board of Public Works have notified the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency (CHA) today that 5,000 to 10,000 gallons of untreated or partially treated sewage has been discharged into the St. Joseph River. A “No Contact” Health Advisory is in effect until further notice from west of the John Street Lift Station to the Union Lake Dam.

Action taken. Persons are advised to avoid any body contact with the St. Joseph River West of the John Street Lift Station to the Union Lake Dam. This advisory includes any body contact with the river for activities such as swimming, canoeing or fishing. Water sampling is scheduled to occur later this week. Please note that numerous infectious diseases can occur in people when they come in contact with sewage discharges and this advisory has been issued as a precautionary measure to protect the public’s health. **This advisory is in effect until further notice.**

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. The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency urges all residents to use caution when using local waterways due to sewage spills and storm runoffs related to recent heavy rains.

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency offers additional information concerning waterborne illnesses on its website under the Frequently Asked Questions button. Go to www.bhsj.org to learn more.

#