



Media release



Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607 Adelaide SA 5001
211 Victoria Square Adelaide SA 5000
T (08) 8204 2004
Country areas 1800 623 445

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Beach alerts are live for summer

The email and SMS alert system to warn beach users if water quality drops at Adelaide's metropolitan beaches is up and running again.

Environment Protection Authority Senior Scientific Officer Clive Jenkins said subscribers received alert messages during the months of daylight saving whenever water quality was not suitable for activities like swimming, surfing and snorkelling.

"Beach water quality is normally very good off the Adelaide coast, but if heavy rain flushes high volumes of stormwater into the sea, it can result in murky or discoloured water," Dr Jenkins said.

"SA Health recommends that people avoid contact with this turbid water for 72 hours after the stormwater has stopped flowing, as it can result in skin and eye irritation or even gastro bugs.

"Beach users can sign up to receive alerts specifically for Grange, Henley, Hallett Cove, Christies Beach, Noarlunga or Moana, as these are near the mouths of rivers or creeks, or large stormwater outfalls."

Beach alerts may also be issued after controlled releases of water into the Torrens to reduce the likelihood of blue-green algae blooms in the Torrens Lake over summer.

While these dilution flows are not as polluted as stormwater, they can still affect water quality.

Surf Lifesaving SA Lifesaving and Emergency Operations Officer Sonya Williams said patrolling surf lifesavers monitored the EPA water quality alerts.

"When this is determined to be unsafe they would erect A-frame warning signs indicating that the water is considered unsafe for activities," Ms Williams said.

"We want our communities to enjoy their time at the beach and ensure that we can help them make informed decisions.

"Register with the EPA to receive alerts on your mobile devices and check out the Surf Lifesaving Australia's Beachsafe app before you visit your local beach for all safety information."

To sign up for beach alerts and for up-to-date information on beach water quality, visit http://www.epa.sa.gov.au/data_and_publications/water_quality_monitoring/beach_water_advice

Beach water quality alerts are available year-round on the EPA website, but the email and SMS system operates only during the warmer months.