TORONTO & REGION REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN (RAP)

Beach Closures (BUI 10) Criteria Update



NEW CRITERIA (2020)

Toronto and Region Area of Concern (AOC) bathing beaches are open 80% or more of the swimming season as determined by Toronto Public Health.

At bathing beaches where this guideline cannot be achieved for 80% of the swimming season:

- Sources of fecal pollution and impaired water quality must be identified and pollution prevention and remediation plans implemented;
- Risk management strategies and communication plans must be implemented to protect human health.

ORIGINAL CRITERIA*

Lake water at bathing beaches contains less th 100 *Escherischia coli* organisms per 100ml of water over 90% of the swimming season.

* Original criteria outlined in <u>Clean Water, Clear Choices</u> (1994)



WHY THE UPDATE?

The criteria for the beach closures Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) were revised by the Toronto and Region Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Beach Closures Technical Working Group with input from the Toronto and Region RAP team. The technical working group, comprised of beach management and water quality experts from all three levels of government, revised the criteria to reflect best beach management practices promoted by <u>Blue Flag.</u> Blue Flag is an international certification system for beaches that meet high standards for water quality, beach management, safety and environmental education. The new beach closure re-designation criteria reflect the water quality thresholds for Blue Flag Certification, whereby beaches may be closed for less than 20% of the swimming eason due to unsafe levels of *e. coli* levels as determined by the local health authority. For beaches unable to attain this goal, remedial actions, management plans, and/or risk mitigation strategies must be implemented.

MEETING THE CRITERIA

In Toronto, 8 of 11 beaches are now Blue Flag certified. Implementation of the City of Toronto's Wet Weather Flow Master Plan, sewage treatment upgrades, beach grooming measures, and crossconnection trackdown efforts contribute to significantly reduced numbers of unsafe or "posted days" at Toronto Beaches. Along with continued implementation of these measures, the City of Toronto has begun construction on Canada's largest ever stormwater management infrastructure initiative -- the Don River and Central Waterfront Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) project.

The Don and Central Waterfront CSO project is an over \$3 billion initiative to improve water quality in the Lower Don River, Taylor Massey Creek, and Toronto's Inner Harbour by constructing an integrated stormwater management system to keep combined sewer overflow out of Toronto's waterways. Construction of the first phase, the Lower Don Tunnel/Coxwell Bypass, began in 2018. Construction will be implemented over 25 years, targeting completion by 2038.



These shafts (left) are being constructed (right) around Toronto and will be connected by an extensive tunnel system that will store and redirect stormwater.



BUI 10 - BEACH CLOSINGS | DECISION FLOW CHART

