

For Immediate Release | May 18, 2018

## Play safe this long weekend

Interior Health is advising residents across the region to take extra precautions while enjoying recreational water activities this long weekend and throughout the summer.

With many areas experiencing flooding and higher water levels, there can be hidden risks. These may include fast-moving water, ingesting contaminated floodwater and/or coming into contact with floating or underwater debris.

The following precautions should be taken:

- **Avoid fast-flowing water** such as creeks and rivers: High water in rivers can overwhelm the strongest swimmers. Even if you know a spot well, recent conditions may make the river unpredictable. Stay away from river banks as flowing water may cause the bank to be unstable. Cold water temperatures also pose the risk of hypothermia.
- **Watch children closely:** Ensure that children are supervised around water and are not ingesting or putting their faces in water. If visiting a splash pad, ensure children do not drink the water or put their mouths over water features. Most municipal water pads have chlorinated water, which does reduce the risk.
- **Do not ingest water and avoid putting your face in water:** Although bacteria may not be concentrated in large bodies of water (lakes), it's important to take precautions.
- **Do not swim in areas near septic systems that may have been compromised.**
- **Wear a lifejacket when out on the water:** Large debris such as logs in local lakes and rivers can present physical hazards and increase the risk of entrapment and drowning.

Enjoy your long weekend – but enjoy safely. Be aware of increased risks, keep close supervision of children and take extra precautions.

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