

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 28, 2013

Contact: DOH Communications
(850) 245-4111

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH WARNS OF POSSIBLE WASTEWATER CONTAMINATION

~GA wastewater overflow may impact Withlacoochee and Suwanee Rivers~

TALLAHASSEE- The Florida Department of Health (DOH) today issued an advisory to residents in counties surrounding the Withlacoochee and Suwannee rivers. The City of Valdosta has reported a spill, made up of a combination of storm water and partially treated sewage, that has overflowed into the Withlacoochee River. The Withlacoochee flows south and connects with the Suwannee River.

Until further information is known regarding possible contamination of the rivers, residents are urged to take precautions when in contact with the Withlacoochee and Suwannee rivers. This includes those individuals in the counties of Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison and Suwannee.

Water contaminated by wastewater overflow presents several health hazards to humans and may contain untreated human sewage with microbes that could cause gastro-intestinal and other diseases.

Anyone who comes in contact with the river water should wash thoroughly, especially before eating or drinking. Children and older adults, as well as people with weakened immune systems, are particularly vulnerable to disease so every precaution should be taken if in contact with the river water.

For more information about the potential health effects of wastewater overflow, residents are encouraged to contact their local county health department. To find contact information for your county health department, please visit <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdsitelist.htm>.

Follow us on Twitter at @HealthyFla and on Facebook. For news story ideas, interviews, videos and more from DOH Communications visit the DOH Online Newsroom.

DOH protects, promotes and improves the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

###

Florida Department of Health

Office of Communications
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A04 • Tallahassee, FL 32399
PHONE: 850/245-4111

www.FloridasHealth.com

TWITTER:HealthyFLA
FACEBOOK:FLDepartmentofHealth
YOUTUBE: fldoh