

Health district checks Lake Erie daily

■ E. coli levels sampled at Mentor Headlands, Fairport Harbor Lakefront Park Beach

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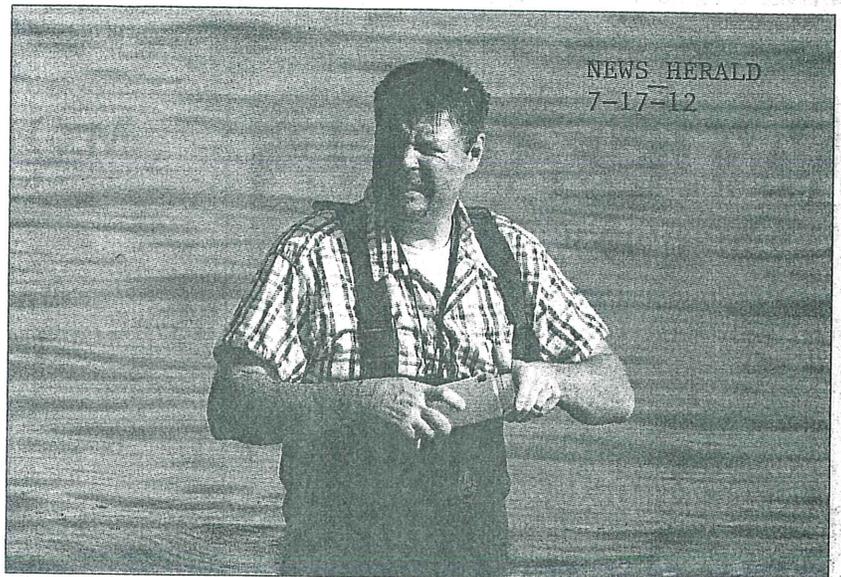
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While Ohio is in the middle of one of the hottest summers in recent memory, organization are working to make sure that people looking to cool off in the waters of Lake Erie stay safe.

The Lake County General Health District samples the water at the Mentor Headlands Beach State Park and the Fairport Harbor Lakefront Park Beach each morning to test E. coli levels in the water.

"If E. coli is present in high enough concentrations, it can make people sick," said Susan Bell, a storm water sanitarian with the Health District.

The elderly, children and those with open cuts or sores are especially suscep-



Lindsay Frumker/Correspondent@News-Herald.com

Sanitarian Dan Sinclair of Mentor gathers a water sample at Fairport Harbor Beach Park that will be used to test for bacteria.

For more on Lake Erie water testing, go to www.News-Herald.com



tible to being affected by the bacteria, Bell said.

High E. coli levels are most often found after heavy rain, Bell said.

If the E. coli reading is above the safe

level, advisory signs are posted at the beach, she said.

Dan Sinclair, a sanitarian with the district's liquid waste division, regularly

See Erie, Page A6

Erie

From Page A1

samples the lake, and he takes other measurements, such as wave height and water temperature.

For the E. coli testing, Sinclair said he takes 100 milliliter samples from about 2-feet-6-inches below the surface.

Bell added the district is switching to Nowcast, which will give water conditions much more

quickly.

Currently, analyzing E. coli samples takes about 24 hours, Bell said.

"Now, we're posting an advisory based on yesterday's E. coli readings," she said.

The new system will use other measurements and a prediction model to give E. coli levels for the current day, Bell said.

Daily test results are posted online at www.lcghd.com.