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## HEALTH OFFICIALS IN HAMILTON, MADISON COUNTY ADVISE OF POSSIBLE BACTERIAL CONTAMINATION IN THE WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER



### Elevated indicators of fecal bacteria

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**Jasper, FL** – The Florida Department of Health in Hamilton and Madison counties today issued a joint health advisory to residents and visitors near the Withlacoochee River in North Florida.

Until further information is known regarding possible bacterial contamination of the river, people in the area are urged to take precautions when in contact with the Withlacoochee River. The Florida Department of Health and the Department of Environmental Protection are conducting water sampling.

Water contaminated with elevated fecal bacteria presents several health risks to humans. Microbes in fecal bacteria could cause gastrointestinal issues and other conditions.

Anyone who comes into 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, Floridians are encouraged to contact DOH-Hamilton at 386-758-1059 or [hamilton.floridahealth.gov](http://hamilton.floridahealth.gov) and DOH-Madison at 850-973-5000 or visit [madison.floridahealth.gov](http://madison.floridahealth.gov).

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