As we enter the 2013 recreational season, the Central Michigan District Health Department would like to take a moment to remind our facilities of some of the important operational requirements to stay in compliance and provide a safe and fun environment for your patrons. Enclosed in this newsletter are a few key requirements along with some general information on topics that have been frequently asked of our staff. We welcome any additional topic and/or ideas for future newsletters. Best wishes for a safe and prosperous recreational season in 2013.

Please check out our website at WWW.CMDHD.ORG for new updates and information.

FOR CAMPGROUNDS:

Frequently while completing annual inspections we are asked about the legality of tents and campers on the same site. Below is the policy as identified in the campground rules.

The use of more than one tent and the use of a tent in combination with another type of recreational unit shall be allowed on a campground site. This policy does not relieve the campground owner from ensuring compliance with other provisions of the act and rules. It is especially important that compliance with the requirement limiting occupancy of any site to not more than eight persons shall continue to be enforced as well as the requirement for maintaining an unobstructed path, not less than four feet wide, completely around the tent(s) and other recreational unit.

For those campgrounds that have public bathing beaches, we have enclosed a handout regarding swimmer’s itch. This is a common allergic reaction from open waters, especially in the early part of the camping season. Also, if you have public bathing beaches you are required by law to either sample or post that you do not sample. If you do sample, a sign needs to be posted telling patrons where they might find the sample results.

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- If closed for the winter season, the well must be disinfected and the water supply sampled prior to opening the campground. Two safe bacteriological (taken at least twenty four hours apart) and one safe nitrate water sample is required before opening for the season. At least one more sample for coliform bacteria is required once the campground opens. We recommend you take this sample right away after opening so we can verify the water supply is safe and to avoid problems with late samples and penalties. The health department has a water lab available for testing.
Campground water risers need to be equipped with an atmospheric vacuum breaker, and water lines cannot be buried between the camping unit and the riser.

Maintenance of the campground septic system and system components (if applicable) is an important part of the operation and the responsibility of the campground. Septic tanks need to be inspected and pumped as often as necessary, filters cleaned and drainfield inspected for saturation or leaks. Check for leaks at towers, faucets and toilets as this can lead to premature failure of the sewage system.

Check playground equipment and structures for sharp corners/edges and missing parts prior to opening for the season.

Temporary food licenses are required when a campground or other organization provides foods to the public. A campground which prepares hot dogs, hamburgers, eggs, chili or other similar foods must apply for a temporary food license at least 5 working days in advance of the event. If you are preparing any type of food for campers and are unsure whether a license is needed, contact your local health department office.

If your campground has a swimming beach open to the campers, you need to sample the beach for bacteria throughout the summer season. The health department provides testing for beach samples. If you choose not to sample, you must post signs that the water is not tested safe for swimming.

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**Swimmer’s Itch**

- **What is Swimmer’s Itch?**
  
  This is an allergic reaction the body has to a very small free-swimming bug which gets under one’s skin causing a rash. The adult parasite exists in waterfowl, such as ducks, geese, gulls and others, as well as in certain aquatic animals such as muskrat and beaver. The eggs produced by the adult parasite develop in the intestinal tract of its host and are excreted into the water by the bird or animal. The eggs hatch into a small “wiggler” form which swim in search of the second host – a particular species of snail. If the particular species of snail is not found in the water, or if the wiggler does not find it, the wiggler dies. If the wiggler finds the proper species of snail, it penetrates the tissues of the snail and then undergoes a number of developmental changes to emerge from the snail in a slightly larger free-swimming form. It then proceeds to look for its appropriate host (duck, goose, beaver, etc.). After finding this host, it penetrates the skin and develops into the mature adult parasite to repeat the cycle.

  While man is not a natural host, humans become involved accidentally. When a swimmer leaves the water, a certain amount of water remains on the skin. As this water evaporates or runs off, wigglers that are present quickly burrow into the skin. Because the skin and tissue is not a suitable environment for development of these parasites, the wigglers die. The presence of this foreign protein material under the skin sets up an allergic type of reaction, resulting in the rash and itch.
• **What is the environment of Swimmer’s Itch?**
The host snails are fairly abundant in many lakes and marshes throughout the Northwest. They are not common in streams. Infected snails are apt to occur most frequently in ponds, lakes, or marshes that are frequented by wild waterfowl, and because of the migratory habits of these birds, the parasite is widely spread. The shedding of wigglers by the snails occurs June through October; the incidence of Swimmer’s Itch seems to be highest during the middle of the summer. Wigglers emerge from one species of snail usually during the mid-morning period, but in another species, the wigglers come out chiefly in the later afternoon and evening. The wigglers live in the free-swimming state for about 48 hours after emergence from the snails, so they are present to attack swimmers at all hours.

• **What are the symptoms?**
Within five minutes to 48 hours after leaving the water, the person may experience a sharp burning and itching of the skin affected, which may occur on any part of the body exposed. However, the burning and itching of the skin does not usually occur on the face, palms or soles of the feet. Small reddish pimples appear within 12 hours and a zone of redness may surround these. On the second day, some of these pimples may become small blisters and in some cases, the blisters may become pustules. Intermittent periods of itching may last 4-5 days. Swimmer’s Itch cannot be spread from person to person.

• **What can I do to relieve the itching?**
The itching is intense and causes considerable scratching. The application of calamine lotion and the administration of an anti-histamine, such as Benedryl may control this to some extent. Applying baking soda paste to the affected area or soaking in a bath sprinkled with Epson salts, oatmeal or baking soda may also help. For further advice on treatment, please consult your physician.

• **How can I prevent getting Swimmer’s Itch?**
Since it is difficult to use chemical treatment on lakes, other measures can provide some degree of success in preventing the “itch”. Simply removing the water from the body immediately after getting out of the water (brisk toweling, showering, and wiping it off with the palms of the hands) may reduce the incidence of the problem. In addition, some swimmers have had moderate success in preventing Swimmer’s Itch by applying a good waterproof sunscreen prior to entering the water. (Many substances that claim to be waterproof offer little protection. The best choice would be waterproof sunscreen made for diving and other heavy-duty uses). In addition, avoid swimming in waters with a history of swimmer’s itch, avoid shallow waters and shorelines, don’t feed birds on docks or those near swimming areas.
FOR PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS:

As a reminder effective March 15, 2012 public swimming pools were required to become compliant with the 2010 ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) as they relate to swimming pools.

Additional information regarding ADA requirements for public swimming pools can be found on the DEQ website at:  www.michigan.gov/deq

MORE FACTS FOR POOL OPERATORS:

- Monthly operation reports need to be completed on a daily basis and copies sent to your local health department branch office monthly while the swimming pool/spa is in operation.
- Quarterly bacteriological samples (unless required more frequently by the local health department) need to be obtained with safe results of the pool water and copies of the results sent to your local CMDHD branch office. The local health department has a water lab available for this testing or you can choose to use any State accredited laboratory.
- Proper working flow meters need to be installed and maintained in the pump houses. This is the leading cause of pool rule violations.
- Any problems with the pool water quality or other issues need to be reported to your local health department branch office immediately.
- A qualified person needs to be readily available at all times or within 15 minutes of being contacted whenever the pool is accessible to swimmers. This qualified person is required to be familiar with pool operations, such as water chemistry and mechanical equipment, and pool safety.
- A copy of contingency plans is required to be at the pool premises.
- Pool safety equipment such as approved backboards, head immobilizers, rescue poles, first aid kits, rescue rings, etc., must be located at the pool where easily accessible at all times and kept in good working order.
FOR CAMPGROUNDS AND SWIMMING POOLS:

- Any changes to campsites, water lines, sewage system components, electrical systems, pumps, disinfection equipment, etc., need to be approved by the DEQ prior to being placed into service via a construction permit. Call your local health department for help with this. See DEQ policy and procedure for obtaining a construction permit below.

The developer should contact the local health department in the county where the campground is located and the DEQ to arrange a meeting at the site. A site evaluation will be conducted to determine if there are any limitations that would prevent the new addition or modification from occurring. If there are no limitations that would prevent the new additions or modifications from occurring, then a construction permit must be secured from the DEQ prior to commencing the work. A proposal would have to be submitted that meets the requirements outlined in the administrative rules for campgrounds. The following documents will have to be submitted to the DEQ and the local health department for review:

1. A completed Application for a Campground Construction Permit along with the applicable fee made payable to the STATE OF MICHIGAN and three (3) sets of plans and specifications to the DEQ. These should be submitted to the address listed in the lower left-hand corner of the application.
2. A copy of the construction permit application and one set of plans and specifications to the local health department.

The DEQ will review the proposal along with any comments provided by the local health department. The applicant should allow an average of four (4) weeks for the DEQ to complete the review of the proposal that is submitted. The developer will then be issued a campground construction permit or advised in writing of the aspects of the proposal that do not comply, as appropriate.

The Assurance Water Lab of Central Michigan District Health Department offers bacteriological drinking water and pool water testing with a rapid turn around time of 1-2 days. Contact your local branch office or the Assurance Water Lab directly to inquire about testing and delivery procedures at 989-426-8985 extension 8320.

To contact your local CMDHD office, please use one of the following numbers:

Arenac (989) 846-6531, Extension 8110  
Clare (989) 539-6731, Extension 8210  
Gladwin (989) 426-8985, Extension 8311  
Isabella (989) 773-5921, Extension 8436  
Osceola (231) 832-5532, Extension 8522  
Roscommon (989) 366-9166, Extension 8611  

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