

GREENFIELD

Health Dept. charts out testing for Green River Swimming Area

DPW director: Samples taken from drinking water supply ‘as a precaution’

By **MARY BYRNE**
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GREENFIELD — The Green River Swimming Area, which has been closed since Tuesday, will require two tests negative for cryptosporidium and giardia — the two parasites detected in the river earlier this week — before it can be reopened for swimming.

Health Director Jennifer Hoffman, who met with state Department of Public Health officials on Thursday afternoon, said she expects to collect samples for testing on Monday, provided water levels are high enough to do so. Before then, the dams will be lifted to increase water flow.

“Pending what that test shows, we’ll have to do another test a few days later,” she explained. It remains unclear if the swimming area will be ready for the swim portion of the Aug. 7 Greenfield Triathlon.

Hoffman said the tests

cost \$600 each, and that doesn’t include shipping and supplies, such as a cooler and bucket for sampling.

“As long as they’re positive, we’ll keep testing,” she said, noting the city will continue to work with the Department of Public Health to ensure proper protocols are in place and followed moving forward. Thursday morning’s lab results also showed elevated levels of E. coli.

Hoffman previously said the city department was notified by the state Department of Public Health of a possible infection in the area, and that the Green River Swimming and Recreation Area was a place that person had recently been. Hoffman informed the Recreation Department on Tuesday, at which point the swimming area was closed to await testing results.

“Anyone who has gone swimming recently in the

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Following the lab-confirmed presence of multiple parasites in the water, the Green River Swimming Area will remain closed until further notice.

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Green River and is experiencing symptoms should consult a physician,” she advised.

The Greenfield Health Department has confirmed that a child has been diagnosed with cryptosporidiosis and is recovering after receiving treatment. No cases of giardiasis have been identified.

Cryptosporidium, the parasite that causes cryptosporidiosis, can be found in water, food, soil or on surfaces or dirty hands that have been contaminated with the feces of humans or animals, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The most common symptom is watery diarrhea, while other symptoms can include stomach pain, dehydration, nausea, vomiting, fever and weight loss.

Giardiasis, caused by the parasite giardia, is passed on through oral contact with infected feces. According to the CDC, the most common cause of giardiasis is from drinking contaminated water or exposure while swimming in recreational water such as lakes, rivers and pools. Short-term symptoms include diarrhea, gas, greasy stools, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting and dehydration.

Public Works Director Marlo Warner II said “as a precaution,” samples from the drinking water supply were collected on Friday morning, though he emphasized that the water treatment system in place — which includes several rounds of filtration — is “very effective at taking out crypto and giardia.”

“We’re pulling tests just to make sure,” he said.

Warner said the water samples are taken from the point at which the treated water enters the drinking supply. He noted the department tests twice per week for E. coli.

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