

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Health advisory remains in effect for Lake Scott

**TOPEKA, Kan.** – On May 9, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) issued a health advisory to residents and the public utilizing Lake Scott in northern Scott County in western Kansas. After a fish kill was reported at the lake, KDHE sampled the water and found elevated levels of the *E. coli* bacteria in parts of the lake. *E. coli* is a naturally-occurring organism, but the levels are higher than would normally be found in the lake. The elevated *E. coli* readings appear to be a result of rapid melting of the unusually heavy, wet snowfall from agricultural areas in the watershed.

Officials expect that natural biological processes in the lake will lower the *E.coli* levels to more normal readings. Until such time as subsequent testing reveals that the levels have returned to a point supporting public recreation, KDHE recommends the following precautions be taken:

- Do not drink the lake water.
- Avoid swimming, wading or other activities with any body contact with lake water.
- Boating, fishing and other activities with minimal contact with lake water are allowed, but persons should rinse with fresh water.
- Handle fish as you would raw meat. Rinse fish with fresh water, not lake water, consume only the fillet portion and discard all other body parts. Cook fillet portion as you would poultry to 140°-165° F.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and clean water after cleaning fish.
- Do not allow pets to have contact with or drink lake water.

KDHE and KDWPT will continue to monitor the situation. An update will be sent once the advisory is lifted. If the public has any questions or concerns, KDHE can be contacted during normal business hours at 877-427-7317.

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*KDHE's mission is to protect and improve the health and environment of all Kansans.*