



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Heavy Rains Create Potentially Dangerous Conditions at Swim Holes and Waterways



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Recent heavy rainfall has created potentially dangerous conditions along streams and small rivers in the Mad River and Huntington River watersheds, especially at Huntington Gorge. With sunshine and seasonably warm temperatures predicted for this week by the National Weather Service, Vermonters are strongly urged to exercise caution and avoid fast moving, rain-swollen waterways.

Vermont's popular swim holes, rivers and streams offer some of summer's best recreational opportunities. However, these areas can become unpredictable, dangerous and sometimes deadly in the days following storms and flash flooding.

According to the Department of Health, nearly 100 drowning deaths in Vermont have occurred in natural settings such as lakes and rivers since 1985, including at six popular swimming holes. The most dangerous places have been Huntington Gorge (16 deaths) and Cobb Brook in Jamaica (12 deaths). Also of concern are the Bolton Potholes, Dog's Head Falls in Johnson, New Haven River in Bristol, Twin Falls on the Saxtons River in Westminster, and Hamilton Falls in Jamaica.

National Weather Service and Vermont public health and safety officials encourage everyone to monitor the latest forecasts and take common sense steps to avoid a potential tragedy: Be responsible, use good judgement, and avoid swift moving water.

When in Doubt...Don't Go Out

- Know the conditions – Remember that water is wild and always changing
- Don't swim alone
- Even the strongest, most expert swimmer can be swept away or caught underwater by strong currents
- Natural swim holes will continue to exhibit high flow and dangerous currents following heavy rains and flash flooding. Use extreme caution or avoid them all together
- Avoid venturing onto area rivers for swimming, fishing, kayaking or canoeing if they look threatening or questionable
- Although not a waterway...hiking trails, especially in the mountains, will be muddy and treacherous after heavy rains

Health Department offers these [tips for staying safe at swim holes](#).

For more information:

Vermont Department of Health

healthvermont.gov

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