FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler beaches remain closed, ocean water tests first hurdle

**October 17, 2016** – While most of the beaches within Flagler County have had their swimming advisories lifted, the beaches remain closed until further notice.

“This is just the first hurdle,” Flagler County Administrator Craig Coffey said. “There were a lot of things that washed ashore. We need to ensure the beaches are free from hazards like this before we reopen the beaches.”

Flagler County is working with coastline municipalities (and other agencies???) and will reopen the beaches once clean-up work is complete.

“There are some areas that don’t have as much of this hazardous debris, so we might reopen beaches in stages,” Coffey said. “In the meantime, we ask our visitors and residents to be patient with us. It is everyone’s goal to get the beaches reopened as quickly as we can.”

The Flagler County Health Department regularly tests water in six locations. Three of those locations returned higher than normal levels of enterococci bacteria five days after Hurricane Matthew and advisories were issued.

Currently, only the beach at Washington Oaks has elevated levels of enterococci bacteria. Advisories were lifted on Monday for Beverly Beach and Gamble Rogers.

“We are doing everything we can to keep residents safe and healthy,” Coffey said. “Recovering from a hurricane is a process that takes some time. Please be patient.”

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