

manager for the Health Department's Broward County office.

Few people swim in the Intracoastal, so testing was expanded along other beaches, he said.

Young says counties are finding ways around problem spots.

"They move their tests to places that aren't as polluted. They choose times to test that are better ... so their problems don't show up. They don't have to post the beaches. I don't think it's fair to the public."

The nine days of Broward health advisories were posted along Hugh Taylor Birch State Park, Custer Street in Hollywood, Dania Beach pier and Northeast 16th Street in Pompano Beach, according to the beach-water report.

"We've done pretty well," Dennison said. "I would say the water along our beaches is pretty good."

The only other Palm Beach County beach cited for unsafe bacteria was Dubois Park in Jupiter, where visitors wade into the Intracoastal surf as they do at Phil Foster Park farther south.

Phil Foster's draw for bathers is its alternative environment to the Atlantic seashore. It offers calm water -- with little in the way of dangerous rip currents -- shallow waters and a shady overhang, the bridge that visitors like to picnic under, county Ocean Rescue chief Don May said.

But last year -- while the beach remained closed -- Phil Foster Park remained under a health advisory for roughly three months straight starting in January.

Last year, officials checked out nearby sewer lines and a stormwater outlet to see whether they could be a culprit but found no connection, said Michael Hambor, a Palm Beach County Health Department supervisor.

Another theory suggests tidal currents around the park may not be flushing the water very well.

The anchoring of boats near the park beach, which could be dumping waste overboard, might also contribute, Eshleman said.

The county likely will do a management plan or take other steps to better control boat mooring and the waters around that area, he said.

The county closed Phil Foster Park to swimming following damage from last summer's hurricanes, which siphoned off a lot beach sand, Eshleman said. Near the start of this year, the county then began an 18-month project to improve and expand park facilities, leaving only the boat ramps open.

As part of the work, the beach will be widened with new sand starting this fall, despite the bacterial problems, Eshleman said.

"It is certainly our intention to re-establish it as a swimming beach," he said.

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