



**CITY OF PALM BAY, FLORIDA**

# **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **LAKE AT VETERANS PARK TEMPORARY CLOSED**

(Palm Bay)--The Parks and Recreation Department is temporarily closing the lake at Veterans Park due to pro-active safety concerns involving potential threats of Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis (PAM). There have been no cases reported from this location and the closure is meant as a preventative measure. Last week, a 16-year-old girl from Brevard County was diagnosed with the disease as a result of swimming in the warm waters of the St. John's River.

Signs will be posted in the area restricting any activity in the water until further notice. The Parks and Recreation Department is working in conjunction with the Brevard County Health Department and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection which constantly monitors the water quality to ensure the safety of the public. "There are no current issues with water quality at Veterans Park," said Heidi Lapin, Parks and Recreation Director. "We just want to be pro-active about public safety and make the public aware of the potential risks with warm water lakes and ponds."

The amoeba thrives in the upper layer of sediment in the bottom of lakes and ponds with mud floors. The Brevard County Health Department advises symptoms of infection include headache, fever, nausea and vomiting, stiff neck, confusion, lack of attention to people and surroundings, loss of balance and bodily control, seizures and hallucinations. The public is urged to contact a medical professional immediately if experiencing any of these symptoms.

The Brevard County Health Department also reports the threat of infection, although rare, increases during the summer months when the water temperature rises. The amoeba invades the brain and the disease progresses rapidly and usually results in death within 3 to 7 days. Prevention is key and the public is advised to avoid warm water ponds, lakes, rivers and non chlorinated swimming pools. For more information visit the Brevard County Health Department's website [www.doh.state.fl.us/chdbrevard](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdbrevard) or contact the Brevard County Health Department at 321-454-7101 or the Palm Bay Parks and Recreation Department at 321-953-8912.

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