

Ill from beach dip

02 December 2008

A man has been forced to undergo special treatment for various skin-related problems after swimming off the contaminated part of Jumeirah Beach near Dubai Offshore Sailing Club.

The Irishman, who lives and works in Dubai but who insisted on remaining anonymous, said that he was unaware that the discoloration of the water and its bad smell was caused by the dumping of raw sewage and went for swim, along with three friends, a few months ago, before the beach was closed to the public.

"My skin started becoming itchy and dry. The condition got progressively worse over the following two months until I was in serious pain, with severe dry, cracked and bleeding skin," he said.

"I have been receiving costly treatment from a specialist dermatologist ever since for this condition, which has been diagnosed as acute contact dermatitis," said the man who works as an engineer in the emirate.

He said that even his friends fell sick after swimming in the polluted waters.

"I am so sorry for inviting them to the beach. Their skin got itchy, their eyes watered and their glands (underarm lymph nodes) swelled up," he said.

"It's a pretty serious problem. The municipality was late in closing the beach," he said.

"I noticed raw sewage floating in the water south of Burj Al Arab two weeks ago. I don't know to what extent that part is safe. I strictly advise people not to go near the water until the discharge is stopped," he added. Meanwhile, Dubai Municipality said that they are monitoring the situation closely.

"We collected fresh samples of water yesterday and sent them to the laboratory for testing. At the moment we have closed the beach and people should not swim there," said Mohammed Abdul Rahman Hassan, Head of Marine Environment Unit.

{Zawya}