

A sea change ahead for recreational water quality criteria

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ABSTRACT

The United States Environmental Protection Agency is committed to developing new recreational water quality criteria for coastal waters by 2012 to provide increased protection to swimmers. We review the uncertainties and shortcomings of the current recreational water quality criteria, describe critical research needs for the development of new criteria, as well as recommend a path forward for new criteria development. We believe that among the most needed research needs are the completion of epidemiology studies in tropical waters and in waters adversely impacted by urban runoff and animal feces, as well as studies aimed to validate the use of models for indicator and pathogen concentration and health risk predictions.

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