



IMMEDIATE RELEASE REQUESTED – June 29, 2017

EXERCISE CAUTION WHEN RECREATING ON NATURAL WATERWAYS THIS HOLIDAY WEEKEND

Additional rainfall, some of it heavy, is expected through Saturday night across portions of Vermont and Northern New York. This will add to the above average rainfall in June, which has led to abnormally high water levels and dangerous flows/currents in streams and rivers in our region. Improving weather conditions during the latter half of the holiday weekend will likely act as an invitation for some to ENJOY some of the streams, rivers and swimming holes that are playgrounds for many in the North Country. HOWEVER, PLEASE EXERCISE EXTREME CAUTION as many of these water playgrounds will continue to witness dangerous currents through the extended holiday weekend.

The Vermont Health Department says nearly 100 drowning deaths have occurred in natural settings like lakes and rivers in Vermont since 1985, including at six popular swimming holes. The most dangerous places have been Huntington Gorge and Cobb Brook in Jamaica. Also of concern are the Bolton Potholes, Dog’s Head Falls in Johnson and the New Haven River in Bristol.

The National Weather Service as well as Public Safety officials in Vermont and New York want to remind residents and tourists of the potential DANGERS that will exist this holiday weekend.

- 1) Natural swimming holes will continue to exhibit high flows and DANGEROUS currents. These recreational spots should be closely monitored or avoided all together.
- 2) If still interested in venturing onto any of the North Country’s waterways (swimming, fishing, kayaking or canoeing) and swimming holes, please closely monitor conditions and if it looks “threatening or questionable”, please AVOID altogether. “When in Doubt...Don’t Go Out”.
- 3) Don’t swim alone!!! Bring someone with you and a rope. Call first responders if someone gets in trouble and try to assist with a rope from shore.
- 4) WEAR Personal Flotation Devices for added protection.
- 5) Observe your surroundings and don’t take any unnecessary chances. Swimming in natural water bodies requires good judgment. Be realistic about your swimming abilities.
- 6) Beware of slippery rocks. Don’t swim above or under waterfalls.



Lastly, although not a waterway...hiking trails, especially in the mountains will be muddy and very treacherous for the next few days. Please exercise caution.

ALWAYS...Before and during ANY outdoor activity, please monitor the latest weather forecasts.

Resources:

- National Weather Service Burlington – <http://www.weather.gov/btv/>
- VT Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security - <http://vem.vermont.gov/>
- VT Health Department – <http://healthvermont.gov/>
- NWS Safe Boating - <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/marine/safeboating/>

