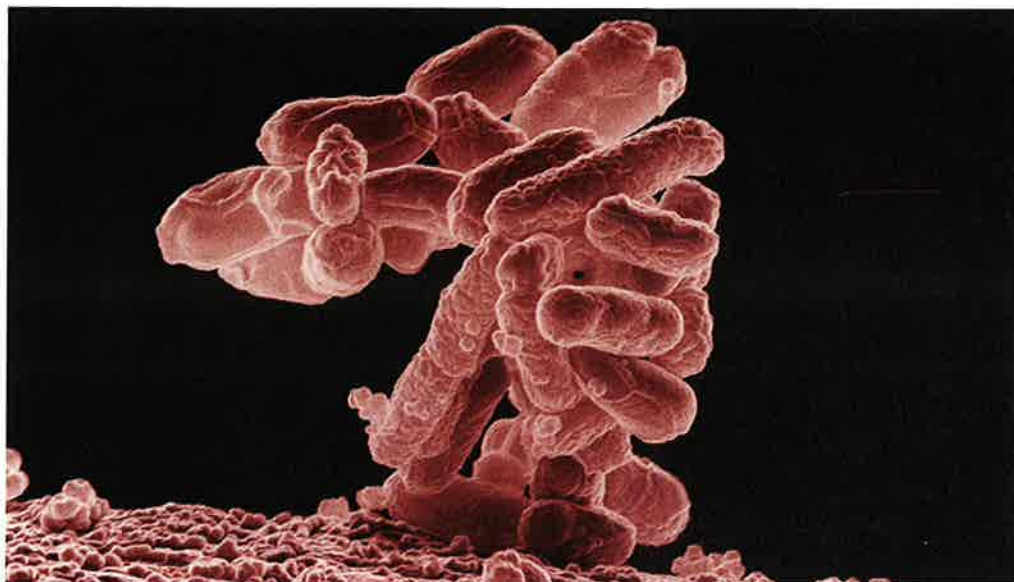




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The E. coli bacterium magnified 10,000 times.

By **HOWARD W. APPELL** on August 27, 2012

Livingston County Director of Public Health Joan Ellison has issued an alert to the public which advises that seven persons in Livingston County have suffered intestinal infection from e. Coli bacteria.

The precise origin of the infections is yet to be pinned down. However, testing to date indicates a common bacterial strain in five the seven victims, suggesting a common source for their infection.

"We're looking into it. We're trying to figure it out," Ellison said. "We are in the middle of our investigation."

E. Coli can infect an individual by ingestion of contaminated drinking water, including contaminated water used to wash fruits and vegetables.

"We've taken water samples where we think there may be a connection [between an E. Coli infection case and the water supply]," Ellison noted. "The samples so far have been negative."

While the cases are clustered to the extent of suggesting a geographically common source for the infection, such a common origin is only suggested, not necessarily certain, Ellison reports. The five persons do not all draw their water from the same public system, Ellison added.

"We're trying to put all those pieces together," she said. "We really don't know the source yet. We have interviewed the people who are sick."

The initial case was confirmed by test results dated Aug. 6. The most recent case was confirmed Aug. 24.

The symptoms for e. Coli infection include severe and persistent diarrhea, sometimes with blood or mucus. Anyone suspecting they have the infection should contact their physician.