

**Coastal Beach Inspection Program  
Summer Sampling 2014 Annual Report**



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## 2014 Public Bathing Beach Inspection Program: Coastal Beaches

The BEACH Program is a federally funded program that provides resources for coastal beach research and monitoring. NHDES inspected 16 coastal public swimming beaches in 2014. During the swim season, Memorial Day through Labor Day, eight beaches were inspected twice weekly and six were inspected weekly according to their tiered monitoring assessment. Sampling at the final three beaches, Hampton Harbor, Sun Valley and Northside Park (a.k.a. Plaice Cove), occurred every other week in 2014. Sampling frequency was reduced at Sun Valley Beach because the beach has never had any sample over the state standard out of all 318 samples collected since 2004.

Staff members conducted 272 inspections and collected 951 samples for Enterococci analysis during the swim season. No off-season sampling was conducted in 2014. During the swim season, 15 Enterococci samples exceeded the state standard, resulting in five coastal beach advisories (Table 1). Two of the five advisories were at North Hampton State Beach and in effect for a total of 8 days. The advisory issued for Wallis Sands Beach at Wallis Road in was based on elevated results in a sample collected in a tide pool. The swimming water samples collected from the beach were never above the state standard. The swim season in New Hampshire was 98 days long in 2014 which translates into 1,568 beach days for all 16 beaches. With only 15 advisory days during the entire summer at coastal beaches, the chance of a beach being under a swimming advisory was only 1 percent in 2014.

Only slightly more than average rainfall was observed in June and August of 2014 while twice as much rain fell in July 2014 than in previous years. June's the total rainfall for the month was 3.83 inches, just slightly more than the normal monthly rainfall of 3.69 inches. July was much wetter than June with 7.49 inches of rainfall, twice the average monthly rainfall of 3.74 inches in July. August was slightly wetter than normal with 3.82 inches of rainfall, one-fifth more than the average of 3.18 inches. The near average amount of rainfall in June and August accounts for an average number of advisories this summer, 5 total at the coast.

All 16 coastal beaches are accessible to the general public. All five state beaches have parking fees as do the beaches on Hampton and Seabrook Harbor. New Castle town beach charges all visitors an entrance fee. The remaining coastal beaches have parking areas for residents near the beach, but public parking is available in most areas of the coast.

**Table 1. 2014 Coastal Beach Advisories**

<b>Beach Name</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Advisory Details</b>
<b>New Castle Town Beach</b>	<b>New Castle</b>	<b>4 days: August 15-19</b>
<b>North Hampton State Beach</b>	<b>North Hampton</b>	<b>2 days: July 29-31</b>
		<b>6 days: August 13-19</b>
<b>Seabrook Town Beach</b>	<b>Seabrook</b>	<b>2 days: June 12-14</b>
<b>Wallis Sands Beach at Wallis Road</b>	<b>Rye</b>	<b>1 day: July 2-3</b>

Annual risk-based beach evaluations were conducted and the tiered monitoring system continued in 2014. Beaches with more visitors are sampled more often. Tier I beaches are sampled twice a week (Table 2). Tier II beaches are sampled once a week. Tier III beaches

are sampled once every other week. If a beach has had many elevated bacteria samples and is listed as impaired per the 2012 Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology (CALM), the beach moves up one level in the tier structure for more frequent sampling.

What started as a special study of the beach program in 2008, has now become in progress projects by two coastal towns. The two watershed management plans completed in 2011 for the Little River and Parsons Creek watersheds are the basis for North Hampton and Rye work to reduce bacteria coming to the coast through storm water. Both towns are receiving watershed assistance grants and continued to use grant funds in 2014 to pinpoint bacteria sources for remediation.

Future efforts of the beach program will include maintaining monitoring efforts at coastal beaches, yearly reviews of the tiered monitoring evaluation to ensure effective sampling is in place. Additionally, communication through new media outlets will continue to inform the public how the beach program works, what it samples, and what advisories indicate. Continued recognition by the Natural Resources Defense Council as one of the two best coastal beach states helps explain our public health mission to the public.

**Table 2. 2014 Coastal Beach Locations and Sampling Frequency**

<b>Beach Name</b>	<b>Alternate Name</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Visits per week</b>
Hampton Harbor Beach	–	Hampton	Every other week
Hampton Beach State Park	–	Hampton	2
North Beach State Park	–	Hampton	1
Northside Park	Plaice Cove	Hampton	Every other week
Sun Valley Beach	Part of Seabrook Town Beach	Hampton	Every other week
New Castle Town Beach	Great Island Common Beach	New Castle	2
Bass Beach	–	North Hampton	1
North Hampton State Beach	–	North Hampton	2
Foss Beach	–	Rye	1
Jenness Beach at Cable Road	Cable Beach	Rye	2
Jenness Beach State Park	–	Rye	1
Sawyer Beach	–	Rye	2
Wallis Sands Beach at Wallis Road	Pirates Cove Beach	Rye	2
Wallis Sands State Park	–	Rye	2
Seabrook Town Beach	–	Seabrook	1
Seabrook Harbor Beach	–	Seabrook	1