

Freshwater Beach Inspection Program

2016 Summer Sampling

Annual Report



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April 2017

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2016 Public Bathing Beach Inspection Program: Freshwater Beaches

In 2016, freshwater beaches were inspected by the Public Bathing Beach Inspection Program from June 13 to August 25. The goal of the freshwater beach program is to inspect each beach in the program three times between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The Beach Program inspects about 170 freshwater- town, state, federal and private association beaches, plus nearly 30 NH beaches are sampled by other agencies and municipalities. During 2016, 527 beach inspections were conducted by NHDES and 115 were inspected by others for a total of 642 beach inspections in 2016. A total of 1,865 *E. coli* samples were analyzed by the state laboratory, including field duplicates and additional samples collected by towns and federal agencies that sample water at New Hampshire beaches. In 2016, 215 *E. coli* samples exceeded the state standards, resulting in the issuance of 79 freshwater beach advisories, an increase of 13 advisories from the summer of 2015, which had the highest number of bacteria advisories issued in during the summer season. Fecal bacterial-based advisories were issued at 48 beaches in 2016 (Figure 1).

Since 2008, NHDES has issued 104 cyanobacteria lake warnings when blooms occurred at a beach, far away from a beach or on a lake without a public beach. There were 11 cyanobacteria warnings recorded by NHDES in 2016(Figure 2). Cyanobacteria warnings were issued at French Pond, Henniker; Norway Pond, Hancock; Darrah Pond, Litchfield; Milton Three Ponds, Milton; Otter Brook Lake, Keene and Silver Lake, Hollis. Cyanobacteria blooms were also confirmed at Greenwood Pond of Kingston and Sunrise Lake of Middleton. In addition, two cyanobacteria warnings were issued for Elm Brook Pond, Hopkinton, each for two weeks at a time. The greatest number of warnings was issued in 2008 with 21 different waterbodies having cyanobacteria advisories (Figure 2).

In preparation for the 2017 sampling season, NHDES Beach Program staff will continue to improve the tools implemented for the 2016 season:

1. Refinements of the beach advisory map searchable by advisory status:
https://www4.des.state.nh.us/WaterShed_BeachMaps/WaterShed_BeachMap.s.aspx
2. Annual reports for each freshwater beach found through the OneStop data search: <http://www4.des.state.nh.us/DESONestop/BasicSearch.aspx>

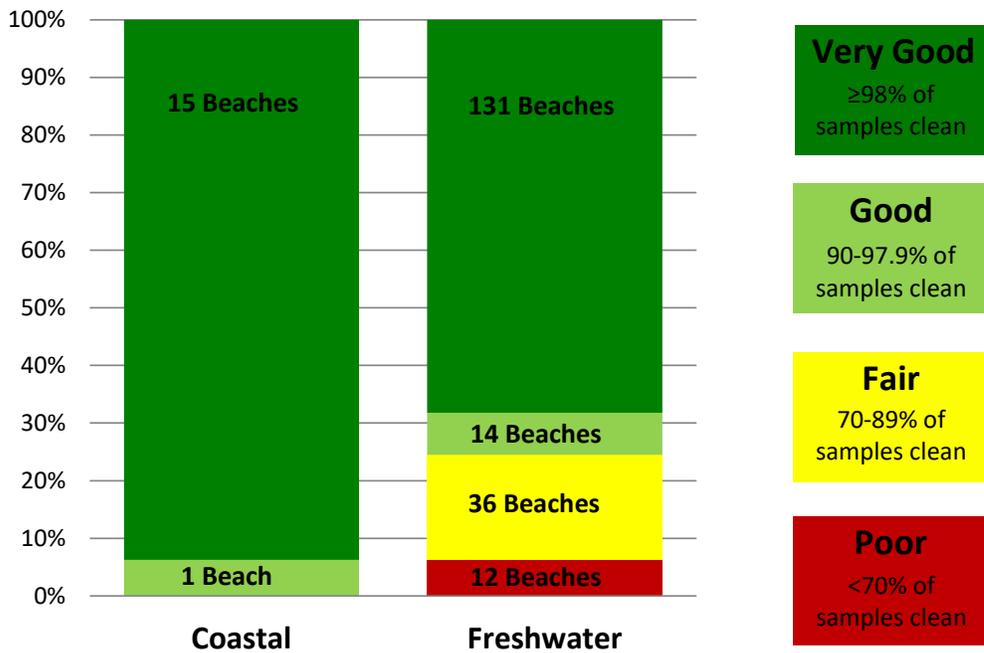


Figure 1. The number of clean samples was compared to the total number of samples tested for each beach (2003-current). During the summer, freshwater beaches are typically sampled once a month and most of the coastal beaches are sampled twice a week. All coastal beaches and most freshwater beaches in the New Hampshire assessment fall into the “Good” or “Very Good” categories, where beaches are clean > 90% of the time.

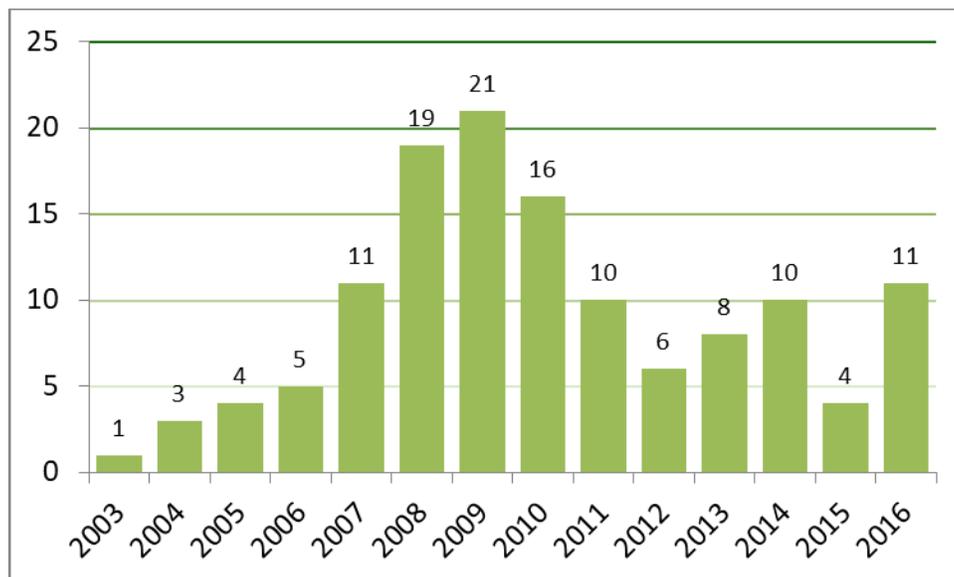


Figure 2. There were 11 cyanobacteria advisories recorded by NHDES in 2016. Since 2003, there have been nearly 50 different freshwater beaches with confirmed reports of cyanobacterial blooms.