

Marine & Environmental Research Institute

Monitoring Harmful Bacteria At Blue Hill Beaches

For more than a decade MERI has monitored water quality in Blue Hill Bay and reported concerns to the community. This report shares results of monitoring *Enterococcus* bacteria counts at local Blue Hill and Surry beaches. *Enterococcus* is an indicator human and animal fecal contamination. High levels can cause ear, eye, nose, and GI infections and children are very susceptible to bacteria-borne illness.

Monitoring Results July 21, 2016:

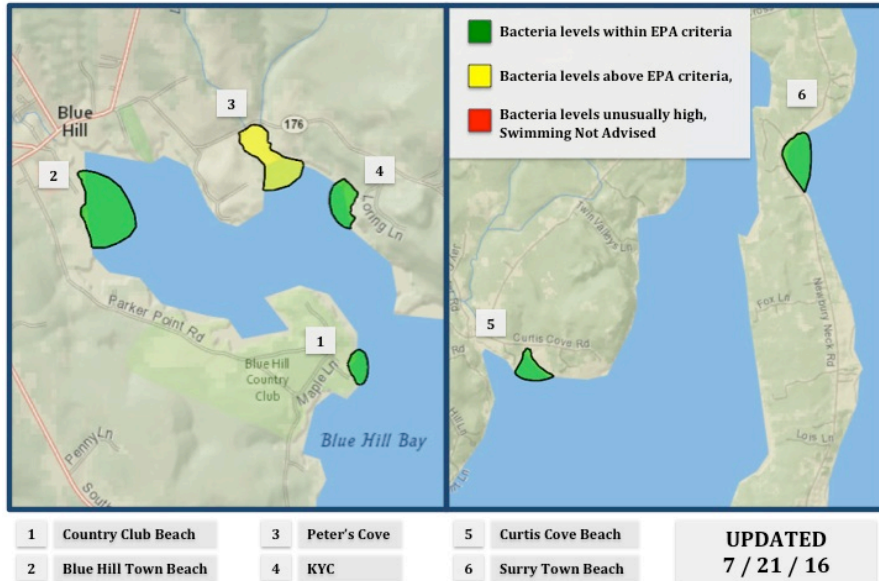
Results from the July 20th daily testing show the daily bacteria levels at Blue Hill Town Beach are within the EPA's criteria for safe swimming (below 104 units per 100mL on a given day), **but the monthly average bacteria level at this location is still higher than EPA's levels for safe swimming.** The EPA advises against swimming when the bacteria level exceeds 35 units per 100 mL on a monthly average basis. As of July 20th, the average *Enterococcus* bacteria level at Blue Hill Town Park was 59.4 units per 100mL on an average monthly basis. This is due to elevated bacteria levels in the July 7 and July 8 samples, both following a heavy rain on July 5.

The monthly average bacteria level at Peter's Cove was within EPA's criteria for safe swimming as of June 21. Elevated daily bacteria levels in the samples from Peters Cove on July 20 and 21 could be due to construction on the bridge over Little Peter's Stream. It was noted upon resampling that the safety railing had been removed and dirt appeared to have been lain to level the area Results taken upstream from the bridge on July 21 confirm that Little Peter's Stream was not the source of bacteria.

The monthly average bacteria level and the daily bacteria levels at the Country Club Beach, KYC, Curtis Cove, and Surry Town Beach were within EPA's criteria for safe swimming as of June 20, 2016.

The MERI monitoring team will continue regular monitoring of all six local beaches and will post weekly updates at <http://www.meriresearch.org/content/beach-advisory>

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LOCATION	7/20/16		7/21/16		Monthly AVERAGE
	SITE 1	SITE 2	SITE 1	SITE 2	
Country Club Beach	6.2	6.3			5.95
Blue Hill Town Beach	8.6	9.6			59.4
Peters Cove	8.5	44.8		78.7	34.7
KYC	4.1	2.0			33.8
Curtis Cove	5.2	8.6			19.46
Surry Town Beach	5.1	4.1			6.85

*Data measured in Most Probable Number (MPN) for Enterococcus in a 100mL sample. Results in red are above EPA criterion for marine water: 35 colony-forming units per 100mL on a monthly average basis or above 104 units per 100ML on a given day.