

# NH SWIMMING BEACHES AT A GLANCE

## North Hampton State Park Beach



29 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03301 • (603) 271-3503 • [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)

To protect the public from possible illness while swimming, each summer the NH Beach Program monitors water from 186 beaches for fecal bacteria. Towns and other agencies monitor water at 25 additional beaches and report those results to DES. Fecal bacteria results higher than state standards indicate contact with the water could put swimmers at risk of getting sick from harmful microscopic organisms in the water. When fecal bacteria levels are high, DES issues an advisory and immediately samples the beach. Once the bacteria levels no longer exceed state standards, the advisory is removed.

Beaches display green signs to let the public know their water is tested regularly for bacteria. Past results and other details about participating beaches are available online ([www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)) or by

contacting the NH Beach Program at [beaches@des.nh.gov](mailto:beaches@des.nh.gov).

When bacteria advisories are issued, yellow signs are displayed at beach entry points and alerts are posted on the DES website. Advisories DO NOT close a beach. The decision to close a beach is left with the beach owner.

### MONITORED

From Memorial Day to Labor Day the water at this beach is routinely tested for the presence of fecal bacteria

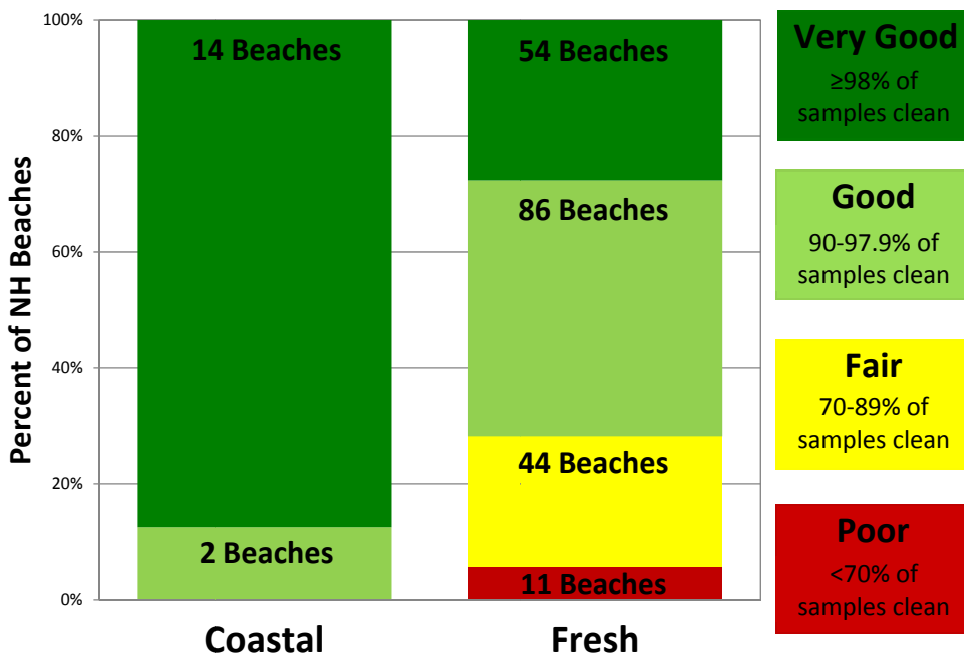
THE MOST RECENT SAMPLES ANALYZED MEET STATUTORY BACTERIA STANDARDS FOR BEACHES

### ADVISORY

High levels of BACTERIA have been detected in this WATER.  
N.H. Dept. of Environmental Services

WATER CURRENTLY NOT SUITABLE FOR WADING OR SWIMMING!

## Assessment of NH beaches: Water Sampling



### North Hampton State Park Beach

#### GOOD

95% of samples clean

Location: North Hampton

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DES samples this beach 22 times each summer

Samples taken since 2003: 1098  
Unclean Samples: 56

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Advisories from 2003-2014: 13  
Average Length of advisory 2003-2014: 2.5 days

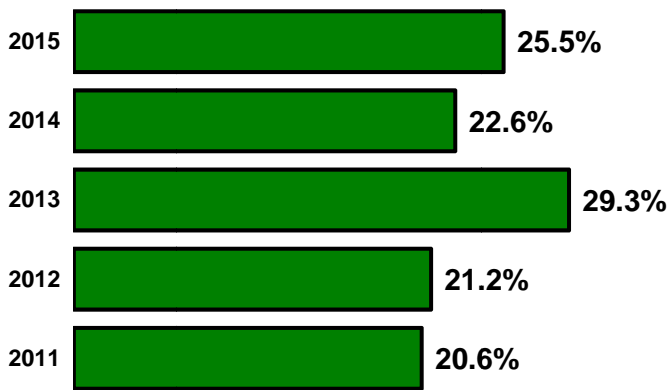
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Advisories in 2015: None

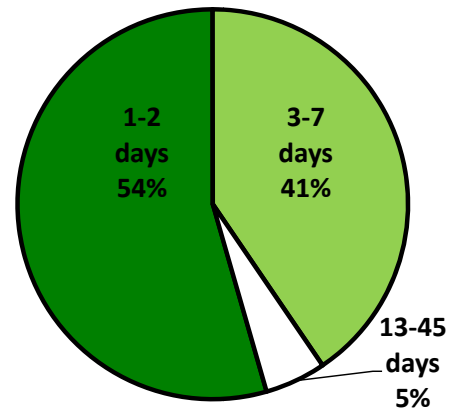
**How clean are New Hampshire Beaches?** For each beach, the number of clean samples was compared to the total number of samples tested to generate an assessment of beach cleanliness. During the summer, most freshwater beaches are sampled once a month while most coastal beaches are sampled twice a week. All coastal beaches and more than two-thirds of freshwater beaches fall into the Good or Very Good categories.

# Statewide Beach Results

Beaches with one or more advisories in a summer



Length of 2015 Fecal Beach Advisories



During the past 5 years, about one-fifth of all NH beaches have had at least one advisory in the summer months. Although 45 beaches had advisories in 2015, 48 other beaches have never had an advisory since 2003.

More than half of 2015 fecal advisories lasted only 1 or 2 days. Just 5% of fecal advisories (4 of 79) lasted longer than 13 days. Advisories were shorter than in 2014 when 38 lasted 3-7 days and 8 lasted more than 10 days.

## Avoid SLIME at the beach!

If you see green or blue-green clouds, clumps or slime in the water, stay out! Caused by excess nutrients from fertilizer, stormwater or animal feces, what looks like “slime” could be cyanobacteria. In large amounts, cyanobacteria can produce toxins harmful to animals and humans. The beach program posts advisories to warn swimmers of potential problems. Contact the Beach Program to report a sighting.



## Stay connected with the Beach Program

Current advisories posted at [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov).

At left, click on:



Beach Advisory

Subscribe to our newsletter. Select “Beach Advisories” at:

<http://des.nh.gov/media/enews/index.htm>



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Questions about beaches and sampling can be directed to:

Sonya Carlson, Beach Program Coordinator, (603) 271-0698, [beaches@des.nh.gov](mailto:beaches@des.nh.gov)