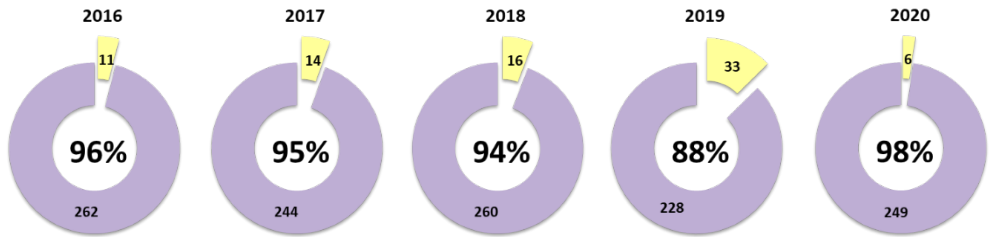


Constitution Beach

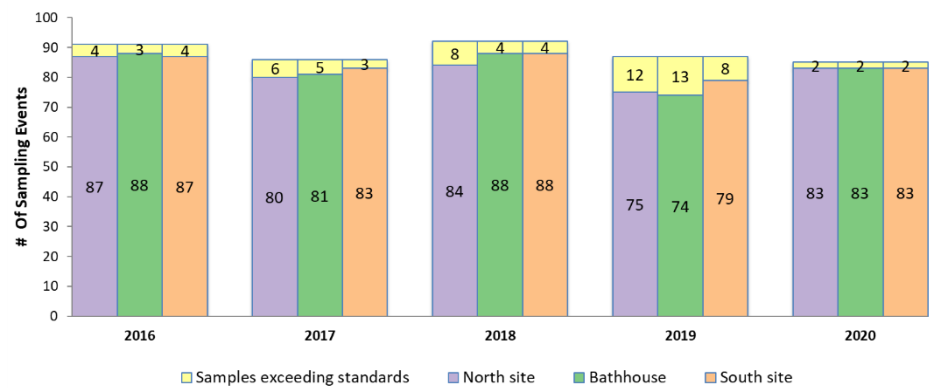
Water quality at East Boston's Constitution Beach met swimming standards 92% of the time in the last 5 years.



In the last five years, 88% to 98% of water samples have met swimming standards at Constitution Beach. To meet the standard, a single sample must have *Enterococcus** levels of less than 104 counts in 100 milliliters (mL) of the collected beach water sample. Water samples are collected at three locations at Constitution Beach and analyzed in a laboratory to determine the counts of *Enterococcus*. Purple represents samples that had less than 104 counts per 100 mL of water; yellow represents samples that had 104 counts per 100 mL of water or higher.

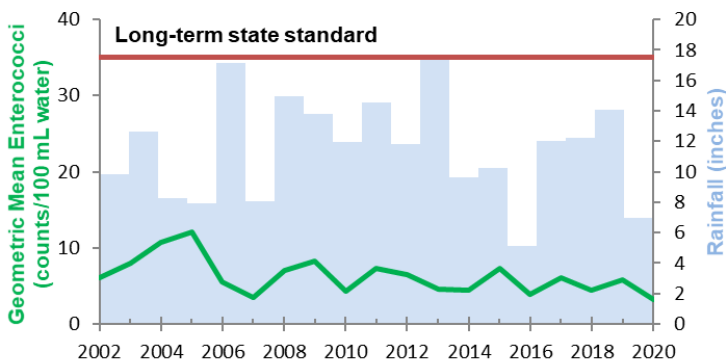
* *Enterococcus* is a bacteria used as an indicator of fecal contamination in water

Water quality at Constitution Beach is monitored throughout the swimming season in compliance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health [beach testing guidelines](#), approximately from Memorial Day to Labor Day of each year. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation manages the beach posting program at [Constitution Beach](#), displaying blue flags at the beach when bacteria levels meet single sample standards (less than 104 counts of *Enterococcus* per 100 mL of water), and red flags when bacteria levels fail to meet the limit. Red flags are also flown following extreme weather events. There are no combined sewer overflows (CSOs) that impact Constitution Beach. The nearby Constitution Beach CSO facility was closed in 2000, part of [MWRA's long-term CSO Control Plan](#). Sources of bacteria at Constitution Beach include animal and bird waste and urban stormwater runoff in wet weather.



Historical Beach Water Quality and Rainfall

Historically, Constitution Beach has had relatively low mean bacteria counts



Enterococcus is a bacterial indicator of human and animal waste in marine waters, and its presence helps environmental managers determine if conditions might present a public health risk to swimmers. In addition to the single sample standard above, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires that long-term *Enterococcus* levels are below a long-term standard of 35 counts per 100 mL of water in all recreational swimming areas. Long-term averages at Constitution Beach have historically been well below this threshold, even in seasons with heavy rain.

For up-to-date information regarding the water quality at marine beaches, please visit DPH's [beach water quality page](#). For questions about this fact sheet, email the **Massachusetts Water Resources Authority** at web.enquad@mwra.com.

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