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2009 Bathing Beach Water Sampling Program Summary

The 2009 bathing beach water sampling program officially ran for twelve weeks, from June 17 through September 2, 2009. The water samples were collected each Wednesday and were collected near the high tide (sample collection, whenever possible, began within one hour before and/or after high tide). Samples were collected from thirteen public and/or semi-public beach locations. Beaches were posted as unacceptable for swimming and re-sampled whenever single-sample enterococcus counts were greater than 104 colony forming units per 100 ml of water and/or whenever the five sample geometric mean value was greater than 35. G & L Lab of Quincy was contracted to perform the laboratory analysis of the water samples.

Once again this year, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), with grant money obtained under the federal government's BEACH Act, assisted municipalities, including Quincy, with the costs of weekly beach water quality monitoring. In addition to local notification (local newspaper, cable, Quincy Health Department's 24hr.Beach results hotline and City's web page), Quincy results were also available to the public on the MDPH Beaches web page.

There were 8 of the 12 weeks (66.6%) in which at least one Quincy beach was posted due to an enterococcus count of greater than 104 and/or a five sample geomean value greater than 35. Five of these dates were during a rain event. Last year there were 8 of 13 weeks (61.5%) in which at least one beach was posted. Only two were during a rain event. The results of the Quincy bathing beaches are presented in the attached tables, "2009 Bathing Beach Summary (Enterococcus Counts), Table 1" and "2009 Bathing Beach Summary (Enterococcus Counts and Geomean Values), Table 2". Summary information regarding sampling details (time of sampling, wind conditions, rainfall data, etc.) is available on the attached table, "2009 Bathing Beach Sampling Summary", Table 3.

Individual beach locations:

Avalon was posted three times this year versus one posting last year. The three postings were due to high instantaneous values. The sampling for all three exceedences occurred during or within 24 hours of a rainfall event. The seasonal geomean value of 30.37 was significantly higher than last year's of 3.77. Postings at this location: three, for a total of three days.

Mound was posted twice this year versus no postings last year. Both postings were due to high instantaneous values. The sampling for both exceedences occurred during or within 24 hours of a rainfall event. The seasonal geomean value of 20.43 for this year was significantly higher than last year's of 2.24. Postings at this location: Two for a total of 48 hours.

Merrymount was posted once this year compared to no postings last year. The sampling for the single exceedence occurred during or within 24 hours of a rainfall event. The seasonal geomean value was higher this year at 16.19 versus a value of 3.63 for last year. Postings at this location: One for a total of 24 hours.

Chicatabot was posted three times this year versus one posting last year. The postings were due to a high instantaneous exceedences. The sampling for all exceedences occurred during or within 24 hours of a rainfall event. On one occasion, the re-sampling result also exceeded the standard, resulting in a multiple day posting. The seasonal geomean value was considerably higher this year (28.62) versus a value of 6.66 last year. Postings at this location: Three for eleven days.

Heron was posted twice this year, versus one posting last year. The postings were due to high instantaneous values. The sampling for both exceedences occurred during or within 24 hours of a rainfall event. The seasonal geomean value was higher this year at 24.23 versus last year at 3.86. Postings at this location: Two for 48 hours.

Delano (Back) was posted three times this year, versus one posting last year. The postings were due to high instantaneous values. The sampling for all exceedences (including the re-sampling event) occurred during or within 24 hours of a rainfall event. On one occasion, the re-sampling result also exceeded the standard, resulting in a multiple day posting. The seasonal geomean value for this location was 30.47, considerably higher than last year's of 8.71. Postings at this location: Three for eleven days.

Baker (Broady) was posted twice this year, versus once last year. One posting was due to a high instantaneous sample result, the second was due to a high five-sample geomean value. The sampling for the high instaneous value exceedence occurred during or within 24 hours of a rainfall event. The seasonal geomean value of 26.45 was higher than last year's of 4.53. Postings at this location: One, for 24 hours.

Firestation (Germantown) was not posted at all this year, versus no postings last year. The seasonal geomean of 8.96 was slightly higher than last years at 2.13. Postings at this location: None. This is the fifth consecutive year that this location has gone without a single posting.

Parkhurst was posted not posted at all this year versus three postings last year. The seasonal geomean value was lower this year (10.18) versus last year (14.88). Postings at this location: None

Edgewater was posted once this year versus one posting last year. The posting was due to a high instantaneous value. The seasonal geomean value of 14.28 was higher than last year's of 7.57. Postings at this location: One for a total of 24 hours.

Rhoda was posted three times this year versus five postings last year. The seasonal geomean value of 31.8 was lower than last year's value of 48.8. Two of the postings were due to high instantaneous exceedences, with one resulting in multiple-day postings. A high geomean exceedence on August 26 resulted in further multiple-day postings (through September 3). Postings at this location: Three for a total of 21 days.

Orchard was not posted this year versus one posting last year. The seasonal geomean was slightly higher this year at 12.09 versus a value of 0.55 last year. Postings at this location: None.

Nickerson was posted twice this year versus one posting last year. The postings were due to high instantaneous exceedences. The sampling for all exceedences occurred during or within 24 hours of a rainfall event. On one occasion, the re-sampling result also exceeded the standard, resulting in a multiple day posting. The seasonal geomean value was higher this year at 31.8 versus a value of 5.84 for last year. Postings at this location: Two for nine days.

Efforts will be continued during the off-season to assess potential contamination sources at those beaches with numerous exceedences, especially a continual assessment of the storm drains and sewers in the area affecting Rhoda and Chickatabot. Repairs last year to sewer mains in close proximity to Parkhurst yielded significant improvements as the beach had no closures this year.

Note: Seasonal geomean values are higher overall this year since values for “<10” have been increased from 1 to 5 on all calculations.