WATER SAMPLING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

San Mateo County Environmental Health Services staff and volunteers collect water samples from recreational waters around the County along the oceanside and bayside each Monday. Samples are analyzed for fecal-indicator bacteria including Total Coliforms, E. coli, and Enterococci by the San Mateo County Public Health Laboratory. The results are then used by Environmental Health Services to evaluate the need to post locations with warning signs. Additionally, other agencies such as the State Water Resources Control Board, local Parks Departments, local city departments, and other interested local parties use these findings in their investigations of potential sources of pollution.

SAFETY POSTINGS & WHAT THEY MEAN

Data is received typically two days after sampling and evaluated by Environmental Health Services staff. The results of that evaluation are then sent by e-mail to the interested public (those who have signed up for our email updates) on Wednesdays with the beaches that exceeded the State thresholds for bacteria. Signs are posted by Environmental Health Services staff at the beaches which exceeded the State/Federal threshold levels and the beach map is updated on our web page on Thursday mornings.

STATE THRESHOLD LEVELS FOR BACTERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator Bacteria</th>
<th>Single Sample Maximum*</th>
<th>5-week Geometric Mean Maximum*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Escherichia coli</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterococci</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Units are most-probable-number of colony-forming-units per 100 milliliters (mpn/100mL)

Escherichia coli (E. coli) and Enterococci are considered fecal indicator bacteria as they can indicate the possible presence of other specific bacteria, viruses, and protozoans that can cause disease in humans. Recreational waters are also tested for the concentrations of Total Coliforms for additional information, but postings are not typically made based on their results.
WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP REDUCE CONTAMINATION OF RECREATIONAL WATERS?

- Pick up pet waste during walks and in your own yard, especially before a storm.
- If you have a septic system, ensure that you pump your tank every 3-5 years and check on your leachfields to ensure they are working properly.
- Do not put anything into storm drains and call your city’s Public Works if you see illegal dumping.
- Limit your use of harmful pesticides and fertilizers as they can leach into the watershed and pollute recreational waters.

For more information on how you can help visit smchealth.org/beaches

WHAT WATERS SHOULD YOU AVOID?

Waters with warning signs posted
Waters that look unhealthy:
- stagnant water
- frothy black or brown water
- cloudy white, or off-white colored water
- water with an offensive odor
- an oily slick or sheen may indicate gasoline or oil products in water
- dead birds or fish present
- abundant presence of algae and algal mats

When swimming at ocean beaches with creeks that cross the beach, it is best practice to:
- Avoid recreating in creeks, and in the zone where they meet the ocean, as these areas typically have higher bacterium counts.
- Steer clear of recreational waters during rainstorms, especially areas close to urban streams and storm drain outlets. Runoff can increase the levels of bacterium in recreational waters during and up to three days after a rainfall event.

BEACH SPOTLIGHT

Looking to have a beach day somewhere new? South of Half Moon Bay lie San Gregorio State Beach, Pomponio State Beach, and Pescadero State Beach.

San Gregorio State Beach
San Gregorio Beach is only 10 miles south of Half Moon Bay. This expansive beach has plenty of space to enjoy a day with family and friends. Be aware that sometimes the creek forms a pond across the beach which can make the beach inaccessible, so look out for signs placed by the State Parks Department.

Pomponio State Beach
Another beautiful spacious beach on the south coast is Pomponio Beach, less than two miles south of San Gregorio Beach and easily accessible from the parking lot.

Pescadero State Beach
Pescadero Beach is another 3 miles south of Pomponio Beach with three parking lots at different access points. We collect our water sample where Pescadero Creek meets the Pacific Ocean under the bridge; in 2021, anadromous Steelhead trout and Coho salmon were observed spawning in the creek! You can also take a walk along the marsh on the east side of Highway 1 and do some birdwatching.

For more beach location ideas visit smchealth.org/beaches
RECREATIONAL WATER SAMPLING LOCATIONS

Interact with these maps at smchealth.org/beaches

Bayside Sampling Locations

1. Oyster Point
2. Coyote Point
3. Kiteboard Beach
4. Gull Park
5. Martin Park
6. Erikenback Park
7. Aquatic Park
8. Lakeshore Park

North Coast Sampling Locations

9. Sharp Park (Sharp Park #3, south of Pier)
10. Rockaway Beach/Calera Creek
11. Linda Mar Beach/San Pedro Creek
12. Miramar Beach/Marlin Creek
13. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve/San Vicente Creek
14. Pillar Point #3 (Maverick's Parking)
15. Pillar Point #7 (Surf West Point Ave)
16. Pillar Point #5 (Cayetanito Beach)
17. Pillar Point #5 (Outer Harbor)
18. Surfers Beach
19. Roosevelt Beach/Roosevelt Creeks
20. Dunes Beach
21. Venice Beach/Trenchmans Creek
22. Pigeon Creek
23. Francis Beach (Kelly Ave.)

South Coast Sampling Locations

24. San Gregorio Beach/Creek
25. Pomponio Beach/Creek
26. Pescadero Beach/Creek (sampling point is where creek crosses the beach, near south parking lot)
27. Bean Hollow Beach/Creek
28. Gazos Creek Beach/Creek

GET INVOLVED WITH COASTAL CLEANUP DAY

Coastal Cleanup Day

PROTECT YOUR HAPPY PLACE

Sept. 18th
9 a.m. to noon

smchealth.org/ccd