

2026 Bacteria Data - Western Coastal waters: Fecal coliform and enterococci

Fecal coliform and enterococci bacteria are commonly monitored to indicate the presence of human sewage and associated pathogens, or disease causing organisms. The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) uses a single-value enterococci standard for licensed swimming beaches. The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) use a geometric mean approach for contact recreation standards on all other waters (fresh and salt). In addition, as required by the National Shellfish Sanitation Program for shellfish waters and their tributaries and as an indicator of overall water quality, fecal coliform levels are also assessed.

While URIWW's Analytical Laboratories are certified by the State of Rhode Island, Watershed Watch data is intended for screening purposes only. Our data are very valuable for targeting areas of concerns and for tracking potential sources of bacterial contamination. Samples may have been collected over a period of days for each collection period, so may reflect dry versus wet weather or rain event values. Please contact Watershed Watch for specific sample dates.

Any result above the state standard is considered unsafe, and swimmers should refrain from swimming until results return to acceptable levels, or at least for several days after heavy rain.

RI Department of Environmental Management and CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection fecal coliform standards:
Shellfish Waters - Geometric mean not to exceed 14 fecal coliform per 100 mL.

Clean Up Sound and Harbors Sites (arranged approximately west to east along the coast)

Watershed	MONITORING LOCATION	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	GEOMEAN
code		---- Most Probable Number of Fecal coliform per 100 mL ----						
LI	CUSH - Palmer Cove North	109	<10	-	-	-	-	10
LI	CUSH - Palmer Cove Mid	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Palmer Cove South	<10	10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Whitford Brook	20	31	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic River Whitehall Landing	10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic Seaport North (Latitude 41 floe	53	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic Seaport South (Shipyards Pt flo	<10	10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic River Park	10	10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Pequotsepos Cove - Mystic Shipyards	<10	364	-	-	-	-	19
LI	CUSH - Mystic Harbor (Red Daybeacon 4)	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic Harbor (Green Bouy 29)	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic Harbor (Red Bouy 24)	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Noank Village Boatyard	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	CUSH - Wequetequock Cove Inlet	20	178	-	-	-	-	60
LNB	CUSH - Wequetequock Cove - Head	20	75	-	-	-	-	39
LNB	CUSH - Wequetequock Cove - Mouth	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	CUSH - Oxecosset Brook	52	111	-	-	-	-	76
LNB	CUSH - Sandy Point West	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	CUSH - Stonington Harbor Mid	<10	20	-	-	-	-	<10
WD	STB - P'tuck North of WWTF	<10	53	-	-	-	-	<10
WD	STB - P'tuck South of WWTF	<10	53	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	STB - P'tuck River @ Mastuxet Brook	195	10	-	-	-	-	44
LNB	STB - Mouth of P'tuck	238	<10	-	-	-	-	15
LNB	STB - Watch Hill Harbor	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	STB - Lil NB, North Sandy Pt	20	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	STB - Lil NB, S Barn Is. Ramp	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	Napatree Point - Cove	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	Napatree Point - Bayside	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
CW	Napatree Point - Oceanside	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10

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Enterococci data on the next page

Watershed code	MONITORING LOCATION	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	GEOMEAN
-- Most Probable Number of Enterococci per 100 mL --								
LI	CUSH - Palmer Cove North	158	402	-	-	-	-	252
LI	CUSH - Palmer Cove Mid	10	52	-	-	-	-	23
LI	CUSH - Palmer Cove South	<10	10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Whitford Brook	75	324	-	-	-	-	156
LI	CUSH - Mystic River Whitehall Landing	<10	31	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic Seaport North (Latitude 41 floe	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic Seaport South (Shipyard Pt flo	<10	10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic River Park	<10	20	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Pequotsepos Cove - Mystic Shipyard	20	306	-	-	-	-	78
LI	CUSH - Mystic Harbor (Red Daybeacon 4)	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic Harbor (Green Bouy 29)	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Mystic Harbor (Red Bouy 24)	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LI	CUSH - Noank Village Boatyard	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	CUSH - Wequetequock Cove Inlet	10	124	-	-	-	-	35
LNB	CUSH - Wequetequock Cove - Head	42	111	-	-	-	-	68
LNB	CUSH - Wequetequock Cove - Mouth	31	344	-	-	-	-	103
LNB	CUSH - Oxecosset Brook	20	738	-	-	-	-	121
LNB	CUSH - Sandy Point West	<10	10	-	-	-	-	<10
LNB	CUSH - Stonington Harbor Mid	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
WD	STB - P'tuck North of WWTF	74	64	-	-	-	-	69
WD	STB - P'tuck South of WWTF	41	20	-	-	-	-	29
LN	STB - P'tuck River @ Mastuxet Brook	109	42	-	-	-	-	68
LN	STB - Mouth of P'tuck	64	10	-	-	-	-	25
LN	STB - Watch Hill Harbor	20	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LN	STB - Lil NB, North Sandy Pt	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LN	STB - Lil NB, S Barn Is. Ramp	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LN	Napatree Point - Cove	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
LN	Napatree Point - Bayside	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10
CW	Napatree Point - Oceanside	<10	<10	-	-	-	-	<10

RI Department of Environmental Management and Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection enterococci standards:

Geometric mean less than 35 enterococci per 100 mL

RI Department of Health standards for recreational contact (i.e. swimming):

Single sample values not to exceed: 60 enterococci per 100 mL.

To learn more, see our factsheet on bacteria available on URI Watershed Watch's website

(see <http://cels.uri.edu/docslink/ww/water-quality-factsheets/Bacteria.pdf>)

For additional information about beach monitoring see the Rhode Island Department of Health (<http://www.health.ri.gov/beaches/>). Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management has information on state efforts to restore waters impaired by bacteria and other pollutants (<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/water/quality/>).

In Connecticut, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's "Water" webpages have additional information on regulations and restoration efforts in Connecticut (see http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2719&q=325618&depNav_GID=1654).