

August 30, 2002

Mr. John Bowman, Chairman
Mattapoissett Board of Health
16 Main Street
Mattapoissett, MA 02739
and via fax: 508-758-3030

Re: July water testing of Town Beach Brook

Mr. Bowman:

Three weeks ago I faxed to the Mattapoissett Board of Health the results of our third sampling of the Mattapoissett Town Beach Brook and Town Beach which took place on July 29, 2002 (the data sheet from the New Bedford Board of Health is also attached to this letter). I am sending this letter as a follow up, as well as to convey a summary map and comments, as per my previous reports to you.

The July 29th sampling was conducted the day after the first appreciable rainfall (0.91 inches recorded in Wareham) after weeks of drought. The July 29th rainfall was the only rainfall over 0.5 inches during the entire summer up until that time. Conditions on the day of sampling were rainy, and the tide was high. Sampling in the stream and beach took place approximately noon.

Enterococci bacteria were elevated to high levels throughout the stream (all samples were greater than 1000 Enterococci per 100 ml). Similarly, Enterococci bacteria were elevated at all 4 beach stations (220-984 Enterococci bacteria per 100 ml). The samples were not analyzed for fecal bacteria in this round.

The high levels of Enterococci bacteria after a heavy rain are consistent with our May rain event sampling and demonstrate that high levels of bacteria enter Mattapoissett Town Beach Brook, and are discharged adjacent to the swimming beach. As noted, this is a public health concern because the Enterococci levels are above safe swimming limits and could warrant closure of the beach after a heavy rain. Specifically the regulations state:

For marine water, the indicator organism shall be Enterococci.

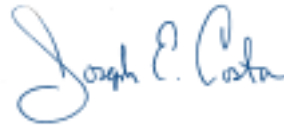
(1) No single Enterococci sample shall exceed 104 colonies per 100 ml. and the

geometric mean of the most recent five (5) Enterococci levels within the same bathing season shall not exceed 35 colonies per 100 ml.

The results of the July 29th sampling and two earlier samplings also suggest that it may be prudent to post a sign near the discharge pipe to discourage children from wading in front of the discharge pipe.

If you have any questions regarding these results, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph E. Costa". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Joseph E. Costa, PhD
Executive Director

attachments: map, datasheet

