



May 30, 2012

For Immediate Release

Save the Harbor / Save the Bay Grades Boston Area Beaches

The Boston Harbor environmental advocacy group Save the Harbor / Save the Bay issued its first annual "Water Quality Report Card" on the region's public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket on Wednesday morning at 9:00 - 1:00 the Exchange Conference Center on Boston's Fish Pier. **(See attached summary)**

To assess and compare the water quality conditions on each beach, the group looked at the percentage of tests exceeding the state swimming standard of 104 cfu/100ml.

Overall Beach Safety from "Best to Worst"

Nantasket	100%
South Boston @ M Street	98.60%
South Boston @ City Point	98.60%
South Boston @ Carson (Bathhouse and I Street)	97.30%
South Boston @ Pleasure Bay	94.50%
Wollaston @ Rice Road	93.20%
Constitution Beach - East Boston	93.20%
Malibu Beach - Dorchester	91.70%
Savin Hill Beach - Dorchester	91.70%
Nahant Beach	88.50%
Wollaston @ Milton Road	87.70%
Wollaston @ Channing Street	87.70%
Revere Beach	87.50%
Wollaston@ Sachem Street	86.30%
Winthrop Beach	84.60%
Short Beach - Revere	83.30%
Tenean Beach - Dorchester	79.50%
King's Beach - Lynn	73.20%

"Some of the region's beaches, including Nantasket Beach in Hull and the South Boston beaches, are safe for swimming nearly every day and rank among the cleanest urban beaches in the nation" said Save the Harbor / Save the Bay's Bruce Berman. "Many others are doing quite well. However there continue to be pollution problems at some of

the region's public beaches, including most of Wollaston Beach in Quincy, at Tenean Beach in Dorchester and at King's Beach in Lynn. We need to address them all if we are to achieve the late Judge A. David Mazzone's often stated goal of beaches that are safe for swimming "Damn near every day!"

Last year Nantasket Beach in Hull was the "Gold Standard" for the metropolitan region's beaches, earning a 100% rating for beach safety. The South Boston Beaches came in a close second, averaging better than 98%. Tenean Beach in Dorchester and Kings Beach in Lynn each failed more than 20% of the tests performed in 2012.

The results were made public at the initial meeting of Save the Harbor's Beaches Science Advisory Committee, convened to conduct a systematic review of water quality and beach flagging accuracy on the region's public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

"Our goal is to help turn the data into information that people can use to make decisions," said Dr. James Shine of the Department of Environmental Health at Harvard University, who co-chairs the science committee along with Dr. Judith Pederson, a coastal resource specialist at the MIT Sea Grant College Program. "As scientists, we are here to focus on the facts," said Dr. Pederson. "It is Save the Harbor's job as an advocacy organization to build a consensus on how to address the situation going forward."

Berman, who teaches marine science and management at Boston University, agrees. "The scientists and technical advisors play a critical role in increasing our understanding of the causes of these problems, and can help us evaluate proposed solutions. But at the end of the day, this isn't just about the science, it is about our shared values and the love we have for these beaches."

By all accounts, the Deer Island sewage treatment plant and the Mass Bay outfall pipe have dramatically improved the health of Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay since they were completed in 2001. However, Berman noted that the first phases of the Boston Harbor Project were not intended to solve all of the problems that cause pollution on our region's public beaches. "The remaining problems need to be addressed on a "beach by beach" and "pipe by pipe" basis, as we did in South Boston with remarkable success" said Berman, "and that's exactly what we propose to do."

Save the Harbor / Save the Bay also asked the science committee for advice on ways to better protect the public's health and access to clean water by improving the current beach flagging system. **(See attached summary)**

"Posting yesterdays test results on the beach is simply not a sensible way to let the public know if it is safe to swim today" said Berman. "Most of our beaches deserve a fairly high grade, but I would flunk the flags."

For more information contact Bruce Berman directly on his cell at 617-293-6243.