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Water quality survey gives Boston-area beaches high marks

BOSTON — An environmental advocacy group is giving Boston-area beaches high marks for water quality.

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay released two reports timed with the Memorial Day weekend.

The first report found that 15 public beaches in nine Boston-area communities were safe for swimming an average of 96 percent of the time.

The study was based on thousands of bacteria samples taken by state officials throughout 2014. The group

said the high marks were due, in part, to unusually low rainfall that year.

The second report found that water quality at South Boston beaches was “consistently cleaner” than iconic urban beaches like Coney Island, N.Y., Santa Monica Beach, Calif., Waikiki, Hawaii and South Beach in Miami, Fla.

The organization used bacteria sample data from 2012 to 2014 to reach that conclusion.