

# East Boston Times-Free Press

John Lynds | May 28, 2015

## Constitution Beach in the Top Ten Cleanest Beaches

With the unofficial start of summer kicking off this past Memorial Day weekend, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay has some good news to report on the water quality of East Boston's Constitution Beach.

According to Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's 4th Annual Beach Water Report Card, Eastie's only beach scored high marks for water quality last summer. Constitution Beach scored 96 percent on the report card making it one of the Top 10 cleanest beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

"In 2014, water quality on the Boston Harbor Region's public beaches was very good compared to previous years, with all 15 of the public beaches we studied from Nahant to Nantasket scoring between 87.5% and 100% for an average overall beach safety score of 96%, due in part to unusually low rainfall during the 2014 swimming season."

The score was one percent down from 2013 but up from 2012 when the beach here only scored 89 percent.

This year's report also compared water quality here with water quality on iconic urban beaches in New York, Virginia, Florida, California and Hawaii. The study concludes that based on the data for the iconic beaches Save the Harbor/Save the Bay examined, from 2012 – 2014 the Constitution Beach was cleaner than Virginia Beach, VA, Coney Island Beach, NY, and Santa Monica Beach, CA and just as clean as South Beach, FL and Waikiki Beach, HI.

Fred Laskey, executive director of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority said having clean beaches in the heart of the city is a great asset, not only to local residents, but to all the rate-payers in our service area. While

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Matthew Beaton said, "The Baker-Polito Administration is strongly committed to keeping state assets and waterways clean and beautiful. I am proud that the Beach Quality Report Card shows that the Department of Conservation and Recreation's beaches are among the cleanest in the nation, and I applaud the continued efforts of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, MWRA, and others for working collaboratively to ensure that the public can continue to enjoy the Boston Harbor Region's beaches."

According to Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Director of Strategy, Communications and Programs Bruce Berman just a few years ago Boston Harbor was a national disgrace, as our waste washed up on the beach and shore from Cape Ann to Cape Cod.

"Though there is still more work to do, with 34 harbor islands, the best striped bass fishing in New England and some the cleanest urban beaches in the nation, Boston Harbor is a spectacular urban natural resource," he said. "The region's residents and rate-payers should be very proud of what we have accomplished."

The Beach Water Quality Report Card is based on an in-depth analysis of thousands of samples taken by the DCR and the MWRA in 2014. The samples were collected at 34 testing sites on public beaches in 9 communities including East Boston, Nahant, Lynn, Revere, Winthrop, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy, and Hull. It is based on methodology developed by Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Beaches Science Advisory Committee (BSAC), Co-Chaired by Dr. Judy Pederson of MIT's Sea Grant Program and Dr. Jim Shine of the Harvard School of Public Health.