

THE EAST HAMPTON STAR

SHINES FOR ALL

Nine Sites Rated High in C.C.O.M. Water Tests



Hook Pond in East Hampton Village is among South Fork waterbodies with recent test results for fecal bacteria at levels considered harmful.

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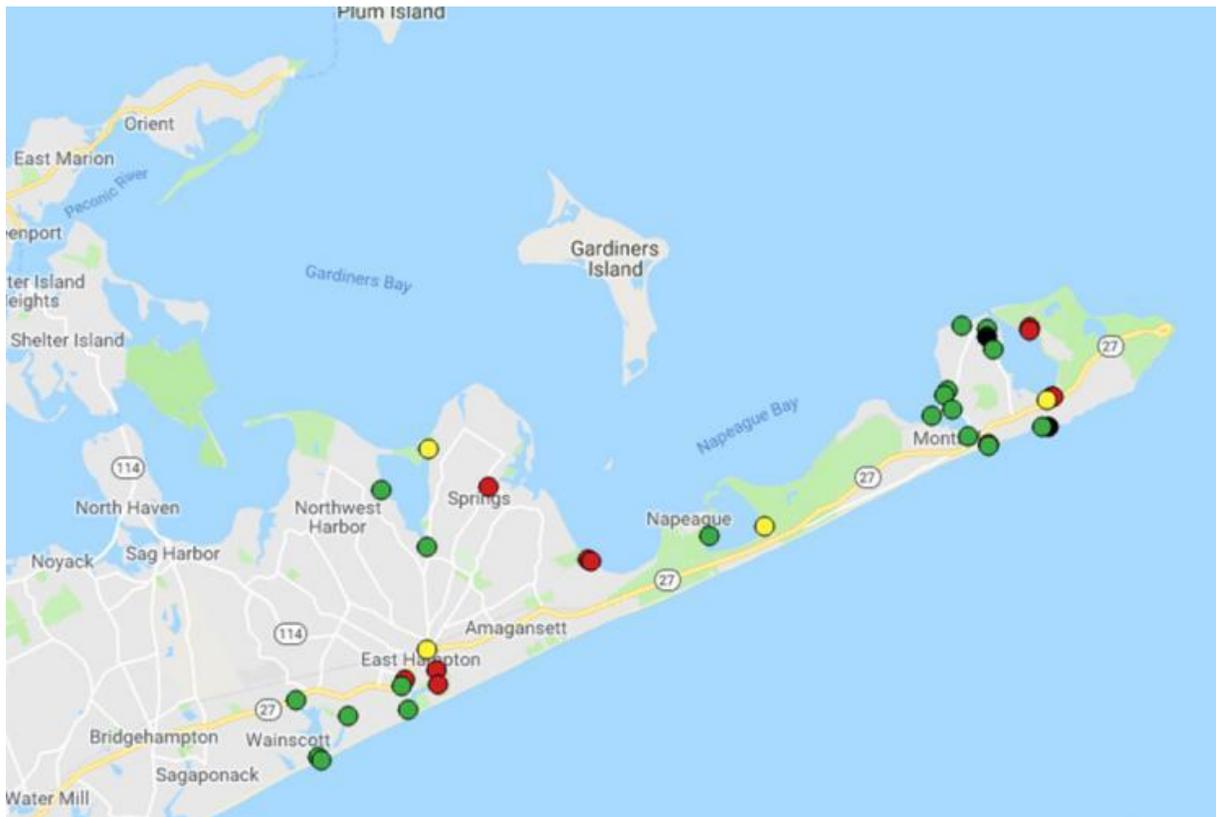
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Nine of the 38 local bodies of water regularly tested by the Concerned Citizens of Montauk and Surfrider Foundation were found this week to have levels of enterococcus, a gut bacteria, considered harmful to one's health.

Test results from samples collected on June 3 showed high counts of fecal enterococcus cells at three sites at Lake Montauk: Little Reed Pond Creek, Nature Preserve Beach, and East Creek, and at an outfall pipe on the ocean beach at Surfside Place.

Other East Hampton Town sites that tested high were Fresh Pond beach and Fresh Pond creek in Amagansett, Pussy's Pond in Springs, and in East Hampton Village, at the Nature Trail on David's Lane and in Hook Pond at Dunemere Lane.

Of those nine sites, eight saw dramatic jumps in bacteria levels over the previous round of testing, conducted May 20. One of them, Lake Montauk's East Creek, saw a decline in the presence of enterococcus but still remained above the "high" threshold with 677 parts per billion. A high bacteria count is considered 104 parts per billion or more.



In a map provided by the Surfrider Foundation Blue Water Task Force, red dots indicate enterococcus bacteria counts above 104 parts per billion. Green indicates the lowest level.

"With rising temperatures as we head into summer, we are also seeing elevated bacteria levels in many water bodies," C.C.O.M. said in a press release announcing its water testing results. It also noted high bacteria counts can also be attributed to heavy rains and extreme high tides.

The creek at Fresh Pond in Amagansett tested high on June 3 at 318 parts per billion. After coming in with high bacteria levels three times and a medium bacteria level once over the previous six months, the Fresh Pond creek has been identified by C.C.O.M. as an area needing remediation. The beach at Fresh Pond also tested high on June 3, with 185 parts per billion, after six straight months of testing at low bacteria levels.

Hook Pond consistently turns up high bacteria counts. Dating back to July of 2018, the duck pond testing site showed only three months of low bacteria counts and one month of medium bacteria results. The Dunemere Lane testing site has been consistently high or medium in bacteria counts since July. This week, tests showed the duck pond site with 744 parts per billion, and Dunemere with 403.

Several sites sampled by the Surfrider Foundation in Southampton Town showed low bacteria counts of 20 parts per billion or less. They include Sagg Main Beach and Sagg Pond in Sagaponack; Long Beach, Circle Beach, and Circle Beach estuary in Noyac, and Havens Beach and Windmill Beach in Sag Harbor. Those results were also consistent with testing completed the week of May 20.

Ditch Plain east of the jetty in Montauk showed no signs of enterococcus on June 3.