

The Daily Item

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Kings Beach Gets Low Rating

LYNN — Summer's unofficially here and beaches from Swampscott to Revere are drawing swimmers with a word of caution from an environmental group.

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's annual beach water quality report card gives Kings Beach straddling Lynn and Swampscott low marks. The tests revealed the beach failed to meet the state swimming standard more than once every five days during last year's swimming season.

Beach-goers flocked to Kings and others in Nahant and Revere during Saturday's warm weather. The state Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) beach hotline did not list any beach closings on Memorial Day, while rain kept swimmers indoors.

In its beach water quality study released last week, Save the Bay said its detailed study of 1,000 beach water quality samples taken and processed by state agencies in 2015 is meant to provide ocean swimmers with a guideline on local beaches. The survey considers heavy rain and its ability to carry partially-treated sewage into the ocean.

"In 2015, overall water quality on the Boston Harbor Region's public beaches was 92 percent, down from 96 percent in 2014, primarily as a result of contaminated storm water from frequent summer rains," the study said.

Mark Steffen, a DCR spokesman, said the agency has worked to identify contamination sources and find solutions to end them. He provided a statement on Monday that quoted state Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton.

"The Baker-Polito Administration remains committed to ensuring the state's beaches remain not only accessible for all to use, but also safe for public enjoyment. The Water Quality Report Card serves as a good barometer of the excellent results the state and its partners are achieving to ensure the commonwealth's beaches remain among the cleanest and most beautiful in the nation, and we remain committed to



PHOTO BY PAULA MULLER

Katherine Clancy of Lynn enjoys a swim at Long Beach in Nahant.

working with Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and other stakeholders to protect and improve these spectacular natural resources for generations to come."

Save the Bay's water quality analysis uses a percentage ranking system with 100 percent indicating a beach always met or exceeded water quality sampling standards for safe swimming.

The study reviewed samples taken at 15 beaches and assigned an average 92 percent ranking. Nahant received a 98 percent

ranking; Revere, 92 percent and Kings Beach was 75 percent.

It also connects Kings' low ranking and "contaminated stormwater from frequent summer rains." On Memorial Day, the state Department of Public Health beach status website red-flagged Kings Beach with the "no swimming warning." Potential health risk" based on a May 26 sample test.

Thor Jourgensen can be reached at tjourgensen@itemlive.com.