

Hudson River Water Quality Report

Two sampling patrols: June 27 – July 2 and July 14 – July 19, 2011

Highlights

You'll remember that our May survey took place during a really rainy week and water quality was terrible. June had more typical rainfall – and more typical sewage impacts. July was a dream patrol, the opposite of May. We sampled during a prolonged period of dry weather and water quality was much improved, we almost saw the entire system test. "Acceptable" – except for a nasty unpermitted discharge in the Capitol District.

The July survey shows us what we could have if we eliminated sewage discharges to our waterways.

These first three months of 2011 show how incredibly variable the degree of sewage contamination is in the Hudson Estuary.

Of 74 sampling locations:

May: 59 samples (80%) were Unacceptable

June: 13 samples (17.5%) were Unacceptable

July: 6 samples (8%) were Unacceptable



Splashdown in Garrison



Unpermitted discharge in Watervliet

June Observations

[NY Harbor \(day 1\)](#): When we started the patrol it had not rained for 3.5 days. So we were not surprised to see that all sampling locations around NY Harbor were "Acceptable," even the Gowanus. It was a little surprising that the outfall at the 125th Street ("North River") sewage treatment plant was the only "Unacceptable" site.

[Yonkers to Peekskill \(day 2\)](#): Again, dry weather and all "Acceptable" results except at three tributaries: the mouth of the Saw Mill River in Yonkers, above the tide on Sparkill

Creek in Orangetown (really contaminated!) and at the mouth of the Pocantico in Sleepy Hollow. Why are these tribs testing high for sewage impacts even in relatively dry weather (3.5 days without rain)?

[Bear Mountain to Beacon \(day 3\)](#): There was a short period of heavy rain during the middle of the night before for areas north. We found "Unacceptable" Entero levels at Newburgh and Beacon. Newburgh was higher, which follows the typical pattern we've seen.

[Beacon to Rondout Creek/Kingston \(day 4\)](#): The last rain was 0.5" two nights prior. All sample sites were "Acceptable" except for two of the tributaries. At the mouth of Wappingers Creek, Entero counts were slightly elevated. At Rondout Creek all sample sites, including the one at the public beach outside the mouth of the Rondout, were "Unacceptable." The beach was open and in use. Note that as we sampled away from the Hudson (up the Rondout,) the Entero counts got higher, with the max for the day of 345 Enterococcus per 100/ml at Eddyville, just east of the dam. It takes very little rain to see sewage impacts on some locations especially at some tributaries. It's worth looking at site-by-site sampling results/history on Riverkeeper's website.

[Rondout Creek/Kingston to Catskill \(day 5\)](#): There had been no new rain since Tuesday night and Entero levels were lower in the region that day. All sites, including tributaries, were "Acceptable" except for one "Possible Risk" sample at the westernmost station in Esopus Creek (near the public dock).

[Catskill to Waterford \(day 6\)](#): Regional rain records indicate that there was more rain at the northern end of the Estuary earlier this week than we saw farther south (1.0" two days prior to sampling and 1.1" three days prior to sampling). Both Hudson and Athens stations were "Unacceptable," but only by small margins. Then we saw lower counts until we reached Albany. The Station at the Dunn Memorial Bridge was "Unacceptable" again, by a relatively small margin (this station is near one of the Capitol District's largest CSOs and about 50% of our samples at this location are "Unacceptable"). The headwaters of the Hudson and also the Mohawk were "Acceptable" in June.

July Observations

Note that we sampled north to south this month.

[Waterford to Hudson/Athens \(day 1\)](#): There was a brief heavy downpour the day before in the afternoon (30 minutes) which may explain the "Possible Risk" reading in the Mohawk and an "Unacceptable" reading just above Troy Lock. About 47% of our samples are "Unacceptable" at this station. There is a CSO just above the lock and the lock keepers have complained about toilet paper and other floatables in the water. There was a family planning item in the lock as we descended to the Hudson. But then we found a whopper of a CSO discharging hard right by the Congress Street Bridge in Watervliet, across from Troy. The discharge was blood red, which I haven't seen before. We sampled the discharge and reported to NYS DEC Region 4. DEC's response was fast and effective; see report summary and photos [here](#). The Entero count of the discharge water was **17,329 cells per 100/ml** (the Federal guideline for swimming is 61 per 100/ml,) so it's no surprise that our regular sampling stations downstream of this unpermitted discharge were also "Unacceptable." As we traveled south the counts diminished and finally became "Acceptable" again after mixing and dilution worked their magic.

This case is particularly interesting as the cities forming the Capitol District (Albany, Troy, Rensselaer, Watervliet, Cohoes and the Village of Green Island) have just finished a multi-year, multi-million dollar survey to determine a long-term control plan for CSOs. But the way NY State water quality standards are written mandates looking at monthly averages of water quality data instead of single sample data (like ours). The New York State standard minimizes the impact of short lived but violently contaminated sewage discharges from

CSOs (which was exactly the point of the Capital District study). So, because of the way the study was undertaken, the consultants have determined that CSOs are really not an issue and have recommended reducing CSO discharges by less than 25% while not really reducing the actual number of CSO pipes. Look at our sampling data below. You don't have to be a Ph.D. to see that **CSOs ACTUALLY MATTER!**

[Catskill to Ulster Landing Beach \(day 2\)](#): All stations "Acceptable" – Beautiful!

[Ulster Landing Beach to Chelsea \(day 3\)](#): All stations "Acceptable" – including all stations in Rondout Creek. MORE beautiful!



Poughkeepsie Launch Ramp, Saturday 7/16

[Chelsea to Bear Mountain \(day 4\)](#): All stations "Acceptable." This was a Sunday. The River was FULL of people swimming - at official beaches, more at "unofficial" beaches (like Little Stony Point), from shorefront private property, at launch ramps and many, many from boats, just drifting along with the tide. It was lovely to see.

[Yonkers to Peekskill \(day 5\)](#): Still no rain and again ALL sites/samples were "Acceptable." Amazing what we see when there is no crap overflowing into the Hudson.

[NY Harbor \(day 6\)](#): There was a short shower late yesterday afternoon but almost all sites remained "Acceptable." Our station near the

CSO at the public pier at 125th Street was "Unacceptable" as was the sample site at the entrance of Gowanus Canal. At **1046 cells per 100/ml** this was the worst station in the entire survey (except for that discharge in Watervliet at the other end). But then again, the water in the Gowanus is pretty nasty.

Until next month,

John Lipscomb

Riverkeeper patrol boat "R. Ian Fletcher"

Together with our science partners from Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory and Queens College, Riverkeeper samples for Enterococcus (an indicator of untreated sewage) at our 74 standard sampling locations from May through October.


If you received this email from a friend and would like to be added to our Water Quality email list, send your contact information to us at info1@riverkeeper.org.


[View sampling data sorted historically by individual sampling location.](#)


[View archived monthly water quality reports from May 2010 to the present.](#)

June 2011 Sampling Data

For River Mile 0 to River Mile 44, the following standards apply:


 Enterococcus count (under 35/100ml) is acceptable by EPA standards*


 Enterococcus count (between 35 and 104/100ml), if sustained over time, would be unacceptable by EPA standards*


 Enterococcus count (over 104/100ml) is unacceptable by EPA standards*

-1	Gowanus Canal	June 27, 2011	0	Acceptable
0.1	The Battery midchannel	June 27, 2011	10	Acceptable
2.5	East River midchannel at 23rd St.	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
2.6	Newtown Creek- Dutch Kills	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
2.7	Newtown Creek- Metropolitan Ave. Bridge	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
4	East River at Roosevelt Island	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
4.7	Castle Point, NJ	June 27, 2011	10	Acceptable
6	Pier 96 Kayak Launch	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
7	79th St. midchannel	June 27, 2011	10	Acceptable
7.9	125th St. Pier	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
8	125th St. WWTP Outfall	June 27, 2011	262	Unacceptable
8.1	Harlem River- Willis Ave. Bridge	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
12	GW Bridge midchannel	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
12.1	Harlem River- Washington Ave. Bridge	June 27, 2011	30	Acceptable
14	Dykeman Street Beach	June 27, 2011	<10	Acceptable
17.5	Yonkers WWTP Outfall	June 28, 2011	<10	Acceptable
18.4	Saw Mill River	June 28, 2011	959	Unacceptable
18.5	Yonkers midchannel	June 28, 2011	<10	Acceptable
25.9	Irvington Beach	June 28, 2011	<10	Acceptable
26	Piermont Sewage Treatment Plant Outfall	June 28, 2011	10	Acceptable
26.1	Piermont Pier	June 28, 2011	10	Acceptable
26.5	Upper Sparkill Creek	June 14, 2011	2421	Unacceptable
27	Tarrytown Marina	June 28, 2011	41	Possible Risk
27.5	TZ Bridge midchannel	June 28, 2011	<10	Acceptable
28	Kingsland Point Park and Pocantico River	June 28, 2011	171	Unacceptable
28.1	Nyack Launch Ramp	June 28, 2011	10	Acceptable
34	Ossining Beach	June 28, 2011	63	Unacceptable
35	Croton Point Beach	June 28, 2011	<10	Acceptable
35.5	Haverstraw Bay midchannel	June 28, 2011	<10	Acceptable
38	Furnace Brook	June 28, 2011	<10	Acceptable
39	Emeline Beach - Haverstraw	June 28, 2011	20	Acceptable
40	Cedar Pond Brook	June 28, 2011	10	Acceptable
40.5	Stony Point midchannel	June 28, 2011	20	Acceptable
43	Peekskill Riverfront Green Park	June 28, 2011	31	Acceptable
44	Annesville Creek	June 28, 2011	31	Acceptable

For River Mile 45 North, the following standards apply:

 Enterococcus count (under 33/100ml) is acceptable by EPA standards*


 Enterococcus count (between 33 and 61/100ml), if sustained over time, would be unacceptable by EPA standards*


 Enterococcus count (over 61/100ml) is unacceptable by EPA standards*


River Mile	Site Name	Sample Date	Enterococcus Count	Quality
46	Fort Montgomery	June 29, 2011	47	Possible Risk
52.5	West Point Sewage Treatment Plant Outfall	June 29, 2011	11	Acceptable
53.5	Cold Spring Harbor	June 29, 2011	21	Acceptable
54	Little Stony Point	June 29, 2011	6	Acceptable
60	Newburgh Launch Ramp	June 29, 2011	727	Unacceptable
61	Beacon Harbor	June 29, 2011	69	Unacceptable
66.5	Wappingers Creek	June 30, 2011	66	Unacceptable
68	Marlboro Landing	June 30, 2011	12	Acceptable
75	Poughkeepsie Launch Ramp	June 30, 2011	10	Acceptable
77	Poughkeepsie Drinking Water Intake	June 30, 2011	12	Acceptable
84.5	Norrie Point midchannel	June 30, 2011	6	Acceptable
85	Norrie Point Yacht Basin	June 30, 2011	36	Possible Risk
88	Port Ewen Drinking Water Intake	June 30, 2011	20	Acceptable
92	Kingston Point Beach	June 30, 2011	70	Unacceptable
92.1	Kingston Sewage Treatment Plant Outfall	June 30, 2011	86	Unacceptable
92.2	Kingston Public Dock	June 30, 2011	184	Unacceptable
92.3	Eddyville Anchorage	June 30, 2011	345	Unacceptable
97	Ulster Landing Beach	July 1, 2011	8	Acceptable
99	Tivoli Landing	July 1, 2011	4	Acceptable
102	Esopus Creek Entrance	July 1, 2011	5	Acceptable
102.1	Esopus Creek West	July 1, 2011	59	Possible Risk
103	Malden Launch Ramp	July 1, 2011	17	Acceptable
108.5	Inbocht Bay	July 1, 2011	2	Acceptable
113	Catskill Launch Ramp	July 1, 2011	19	Acceptable
113.1	Catskill Creek - East End	July 1, 2011	15	Acceptable
113.2	Catskill Creek - First Bridge	July 1, 2011	4	Acceptable
116.5	Hudson (Town of) - boat ramp	July 2, 2011	74	Unacceptable
117	Athens STP Outfall	July 2, 2011	67	Unacceptable
122.5	Gay's Point Midchannel	July 2, 2011	37	Possible Risk
124	Coxsackie Waterfront Park	July 2, 2011	47	Possible Risk
133	Coeymans Landing	July 2, 2011	15	Acceptable
137	Castleton- Vlockie Kill	July 2, 2011	25	Acceptable
138	Bethlehem Launch Ramp	July 2, 2011	16	Acceptable
142	Island Creek/Normans Kill	July 2, 2011	18	Acceptable
144.5	Dunn Memorial Bridge - Albany	July 2, 2011	84	Unacceptable
146	Albany Rowing Dock	July 2, 2011	31	Acceptable
151.5	Congress St. Bridge - Troy	July 2, 2011	17	Acceptable
152.5	Hudson River above Troy Lock	July 2, 2011	63	Unacceptable
155	Mohawk River	July 2, 2011	4	Acceptable
155.1	Hudson above confluence with Mohawk River	July 2, 2011	11	Acceptable

July 2011 Sampling Data

For River Mile 155 to Mile 45, the following standards apply:


 Enterococcus count (under 33/100ml) is acceptable by EPA standards*


 Enterococcus count (between 33 and 61/100ml), if sustained over time, would be unacceptable by EPA standards*


 Enterococcus count (61/100ml) is unacceptable by EPA standards*

River Mile	Site Name	Sample Date	Enterococcus Count	Quality
155.1	Hudson above confluence with Mohawk River	July 14, 2011	11	Acceptable
155	Mohawk River	July 14, 2011	33	Possible Risk
152.5	Hudson River above Troy Lock	July 14, 2011	108	Unacceptable
151.5	Congress Street Bridge	July 14, 2011	219	Unacceptable
146	Albany Rowing Dock	July 14, 2011	82	Unacceptable
144.5	Dunn Memorial Bridge	July 14, 2011	76	Unacceptable
142	Island Creek/Normans Kill	July 14, 2011	30	Acceptable
138	Bethlehem Launch Ramp	July 14, 2011	4	Acceptable
137	Castleton- Vlockie Kill	July 14, 2011	2	Acceptable
133	Coeymans Landing	July 14, 2011	6	Acceptable
124	Coxsackie Waterfront Park	July 14, 2011	13	Acceptable
122.5	Gay's Point Midchannel	July 14, 2011	10	Acceptable
117	Athens Sewage Treatment Plant Outfall	July 14, 2011	24	Acceptable
116.5	Hudson Launch Ramp	July 14, 2011	6	Acceptable
113.2	Catskill Creek - First Bridge	July 15, 2011	24	Acceptable
113.1	Catskill Creek - East End	July 15, 2011	16	Acceptable
113	Catskill Launch Ramp	July 15, 2011	3	Acceptable
108.5	Inbocht Bay	July 15, 2011	4	Acceptable
103	Malden Launch Ramp	July 15, 2011	7	Acceptable
102.1	Esopus Creek West	July 15, 2011	21	Acceptable
102	Esopus Creek Entrance	July 15, 2011	1	Acceptable
99	Tivoli Landing	July 15, 2011	<1	Acceptable
97	Ulster Landing Beach	July 15, 2011	<1	Acceptable
92.3	Eddyville Anchorage	July 16, 2011	3	Acceptable
92.2	Kingston Public Dock	July 16, 2011	5	Acceptable
92.1	Kingston Sewage Treatment Plant Outfall	July 16, 2011	10	Acceptable
92	Kingston Point Beach	July 16, 2011	2	Acceptable
88	Port Ewen Drinking Water Intake	July 16, 2011	<1	Acceptable
85	Norrie Point Yacht Basin	July 16, 2011	1	Acceptable
84.5	Norrie Point midchannel	July 16, 2011	2	Acceptable
77	Poughkeepsie Drinking Water Intake	July 16, 2011	1	Acceptable
75	Poughkeepsie Launch Ramp	July 16, 2011	3	Acceptable
68	Marlboro Landing	July 17, 2011	2	Acceptable
66.5	Wappingers Creek	July 17, 2011	3	Acceptable
61	Beacon Harbor	July 17, 2011	<1	Acceptable
60	Newburgh Launch Ramp	July 17, 2011	12	Acceptable
54	Little Stony Point	July 17, 2011	<1	Acceptable
53.5	Cold Spring Harbor	July 17, 2011	10	Acceptable
52.5	West Point Sewage Treatment Plant Outfall	July 17, 2011	2	Acceptable
46	Fort Montgomery	July 17, 2011	1	Acceptable

For River Mile 44 to River Mile 0, the following standards apply:

 Enterococcus count (under 35/100ml) is acceptable by EPA standards*

 Enterococcus count (between 35 and 104/100ml), if sustained over time, would be unacceptable by EPA standards*

 Enterococcus count (over 104/100ml) is unacceptable by EPA standards*

River Mile	Site Name	Sample Date	Enterococcus Count	Quality
44	Annesville Creek	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
43	Peekskill Riverfront Green Park	July 18, 2011	20	Acceptable
40.5	Stony Point midchannel	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
40	Cedar Pond Brook	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
39	Emeline Beach	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
38	Furnace Brook	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
35.5	Haverstraw Bay midchannel	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
35	Croton Point Beach	July 18, 2011	10	Acceptable
34	Ossining Beach	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
28.1	Nyack Launch Ramp	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
28	Kingsland Point Park and Pocantico River	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
27.5	Tappan Zee Bridge midchannel	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
27	Tarrytown marina	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
26.1	Piermont Pier	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
26	Piermont Sewage Treatment Plant Outfall	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
25.9	Irvington Beach	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
18.5	Yonkers midchannel	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
18.4	Saw Mill River	July 18, 2011	10	Acceptable
17.5	Yonkers Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall	July 18, 2011	<10	Acceptable
14	Dyckman St. Beach	July 19, 2011	<10	Acceptable
12.1	Harlem River- Washington Ave. Bridge	July 19, 2011	10	Acceptable
12	GW Bridge midchannel	July 19, 2011	<10	Acceptable
8.1	Harlem River- Willis Ave. Bridge	July 19, 2011	30	Acceptable
8	125th St. WWTP Outfall	July 19, 2011	<10	Acceptable
7.9	125th St. Pier	July 19, 2011	121	Unacceptable
7	79th St. midchannel	July 19, 2011	<10	Acceptable
6	Pier 96 Kayak Launch	July 19, 2011	31	Acceptable
4.7	Castle Point, NJ	July 19, 2011	<10	Acceptable
4	East River at Roosevelt Island	July 19, 2011	<10	Acceptable
2.7	Newtown Creek- Metropolitan Ave. Bridge	July 19, 2011	10	Acceptable
2.6	Newtown Creek- Dutch Kills	July 19, 2011	10	Acceptable
2.5	East River midchannel at 23rd St.	July 19, 2011	<10	Acceptable
0.1	The Battery midchannel	July 19, 2011	<10	Acceptable
-1	Gowanus canal	July 19, 2011	1046	Unacceptable

To learn more about Riverkeeper's Water Quality Program, and to view historic sampling data, please visit www.riverkeeper.org/water-quality/hudson.

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