



Save the Sound®

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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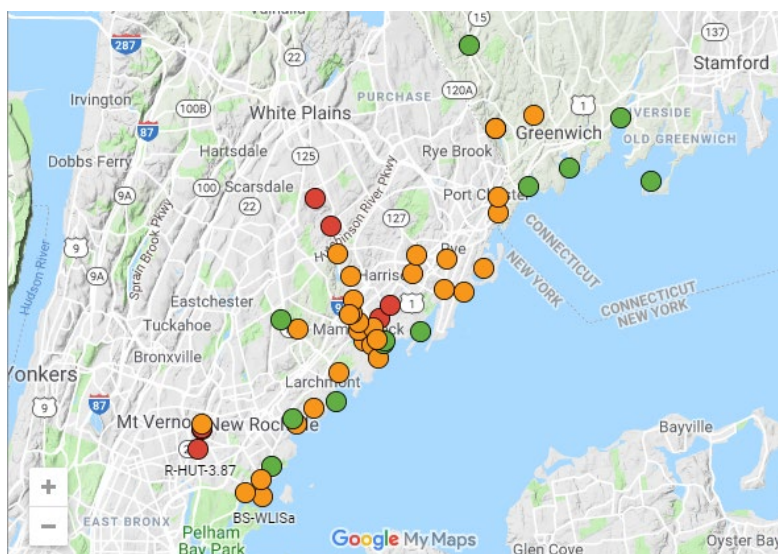
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## BACTERIA TESTING SHOWS PERSISTENT POLLUTION IN WESTERN SOUND WATERWAYS

*Water pollution in the Hutchinson River worsens – 40x higher than safe swimming standards*

MAMARONECK, New York— Save the Sound today released results of its 2019 bacteria water quality monitoring from 62 sites in Westchester, Queens, and Nassau Counties in New York, and Greenwich, Connecticut. Twenty-seven trained volunteers collected 647 samples, which were analyzed in Save the Sound’s lab specifically for fecal bacteria levels. The results show area streams, creeks, and rivers are still polluted and continue to carry that pollution to Long Island Sound. There were fewer wet weather samples collected in 2019 which may account for improvements measured in most rivers this year. The Hutchinson River, however, actually got markedly worse.

“Looking at the data, it is clear that some of Westchester communities’ wastewater is still not making it to the treatment plants,” **said Tracy Brown, director of Save the Sound.** “Untreated sewage is escaping from aging sewage collection pipes into rivers and streams, which ultimately carry fecal bacteria to the Sound. This poses a public health risk for people and degrades our environment.”

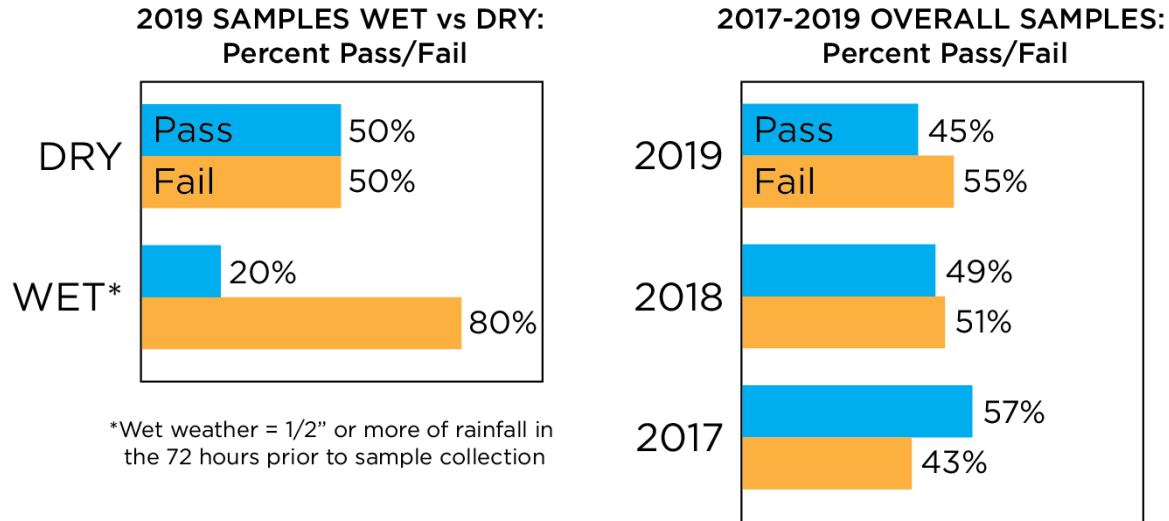


Green = Passes safe swim criteria, Orange = Fails safe swim criteria, Red = Fails safe swim criteria by 10X or more

[Click here to view interactive map and access the data sets.](#)

### Overall increase in fecal bacteria

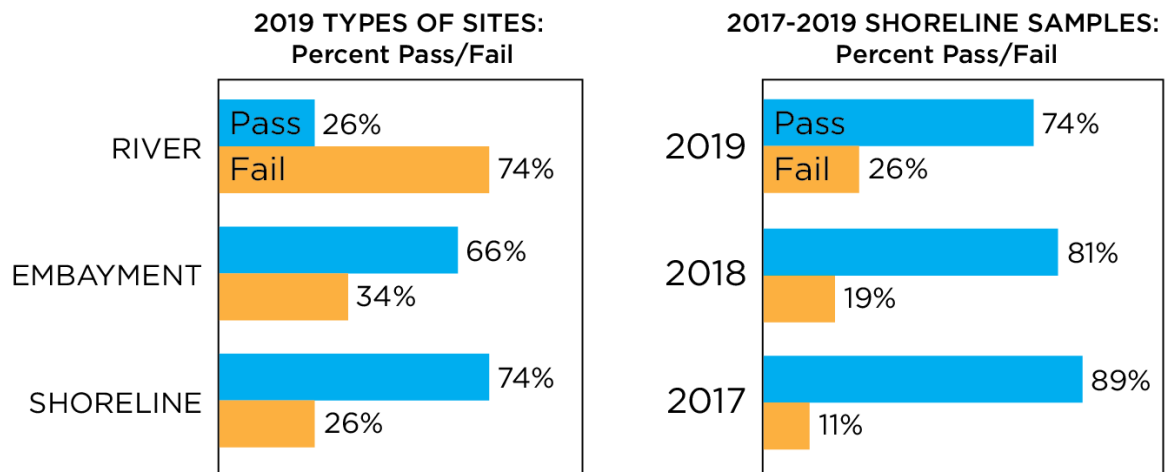
Save the Sound documented a slight overall increase of pollution this year from 2018. Fecal contamination rates increased from 51% contaminated in 2018 to 55% contaminated in 2019.



Failure is based on US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) safe swimming criteria used in Connecticut and New York to monitor and manage beaches. Because wet weather causes pollution to flush off the landscape and into the waterways, and can triggers overflows of untreated sewage, Save the Sound reports on wet weather samples separately. This year, as in all past years, a spike in fecal contamination was measured after rainfall at most locations.

### Shoreline location failure percentage increases

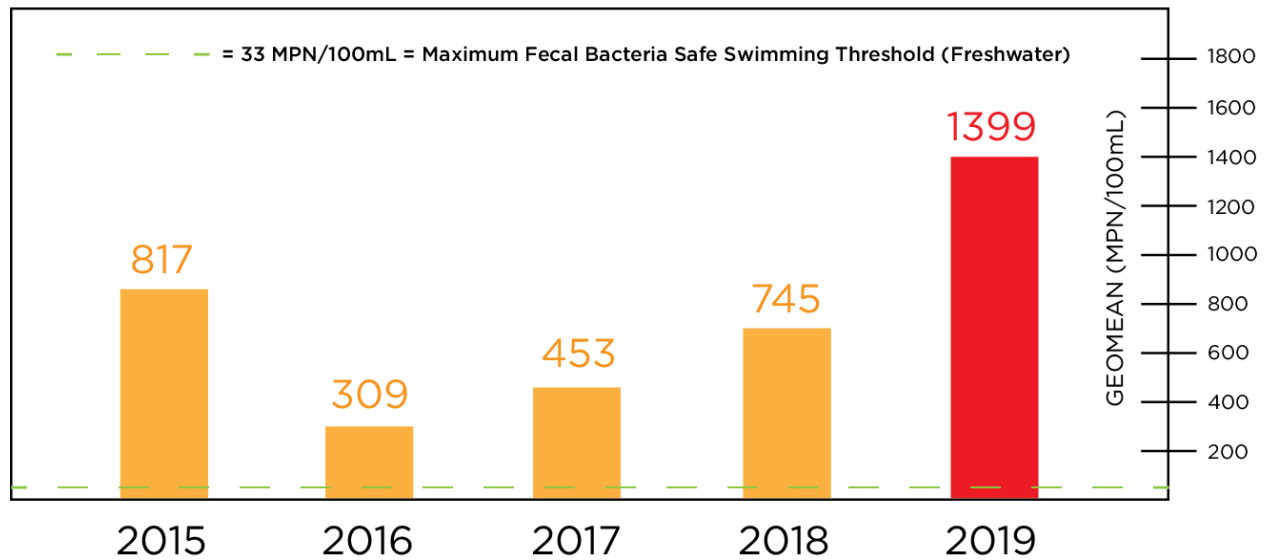
Though rivers remain the most polluted sites in 2019, there was a notable increase in fecal contamination at shoreline locations this year. Fecal contamination failure rates at these locations showed a troubling trend rising from 11% in 2017, to 19% in 2018, to 26% in 2019.



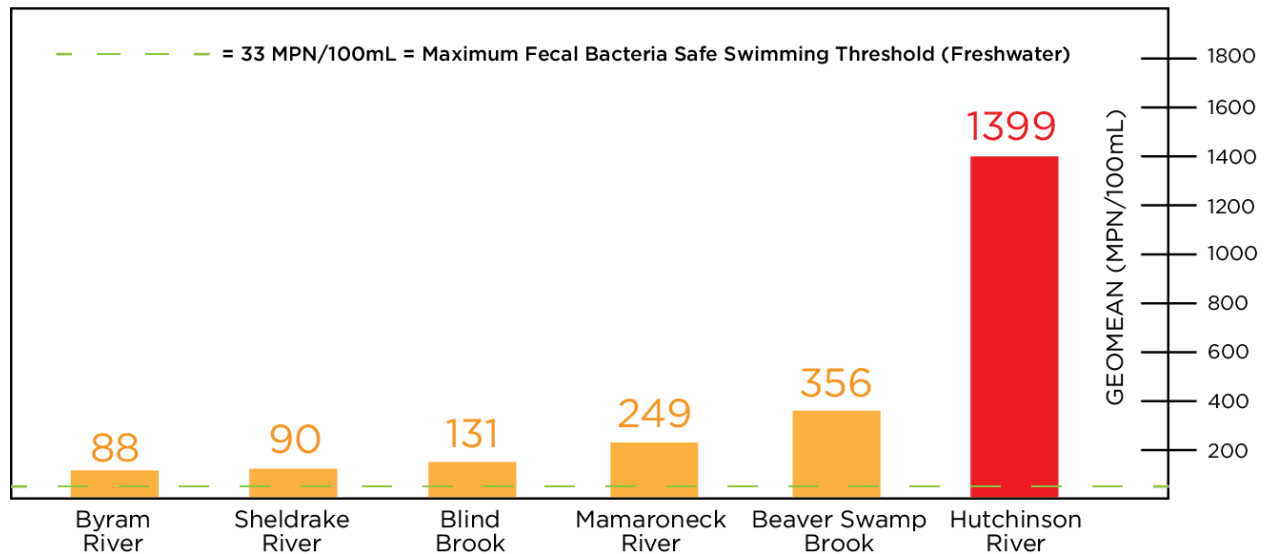
### Unacceptable Hutchinson River Results

After showing signs of considerable improvement in 2016, the fecal contamination in Westchester County's Hutchinson River has steadily climbed back up, now exceeding the high levels we first documented in 2015. With an average of 1399 MPN/100 mL, the water pollution in the Hutchinson measured **40 times higher than the federal and state levels set for safe swimming waters** ( $\geq 33$  MPN/100 mL).

### 2015-2019 HUTCHINSON RIVER SITES: Enterococcus Geometric Mean



### 2019 RIVER SITES COMPARISON: Enterococcus Geometric Mean



Save the Sound reported high fecal bacteria levels in Mount Vernon to the EPA, NY Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and the public several years ago. In response to these reports and data they collected to confirm the findings, EPA took legal action against Mount Vernon, mandating inspection and repair of the city's failing sewage infrastructure. Efforts in Mount Vernon to address the problem have been insufficient and slow.

Save the Sound again sampled numerous locations on the Hutchinson River this year and submitted results to Mount Vernon and the EPA showing the unacceptably high presence of fecal contamination. Save the Sound will continue to fight for clean water in this waterway both for people's health and environmental protection.

## Best and Worst of 2019

### TEN BEST SITES IN 2019 WITH LOWEST FECAL CONTAMINATION LEVELS

Site ID	Site Name, Town, State	%Fail	%Pass	GeoMean All <i>Enterococcus</i>	Maximum <i>Enteroc.</i>
E-GCa	Greenwich Cove, Greenwich, CT	0%	100%	5	10
E-GHa	Indian Harbor Yacht Club, Greenwich, CT	0%	100%	6	10
E-VAMa	Van Amridge Mill Pond, Mamaroneck Village, NY	0%	100%	8	41
R-MIR-1.40	Mianus River @ Cos Cob Marina, Greenwich, CT	9%	91%	12	187
R-SHR-2.91	Sheldrake Lake, New Rochelle, NY	10%	90%	14	181
E-LHa	Larchmont Harbor @ Park Ave Larchmont, NY	20%	80%	16	780
E-MHb	Mamaroneck Harbor @ Taylor Lane, Mamaroneck Village, NY	0%	100%	17	41
E-NRHa	Neptune Boat Club, New Rochelle, NY	18%	82%	17	1,178
R-BREB-0.20	East Branch Byram River @ Riversville Road, Greenwich, CT	36%	64%	24	121
E-WLISc	Five Islands Approach @ Le Fevres Lane New Rochelle, NY	20%	80%	25	1,178

### TEN WORST SITES in 2019 WITH HIGHEST FECAL CONTAMINATION LEVELS

Site ID	Site Name, Town, State	%Fail	%Pass	GeoMean All <i>Enterococcus</i>	Maximum <i>Enteroc.</i>
R-HUT-4.40	Outfall @ Farrell and Beechwood, Mount Vernon, NY	100%	0%	7,666	19,863
R-HUT-3.87	Glover Field, Mount Vernon, NY	100%	0%	2,776	>24,196
R-HUT-4.42	Upstream of Farrell and Beechwood, Mount Vernon, NY	100%	0%	967	>24,196
E-UMP	Udalls Mill Pond, Saddle Rock, NY	91%	9%	945	19,863
R-BSB-0.46	Beaver Swamp Brook @ Rye Neck HS, Mamaroneck Village, NY	100%	0%	717	4,352
R-MR-5.12	Mamaroneck River @ Reynal Rd, White Plains, NY	100%	0%	498	1,935
R-BSB-0.06	Beaver Swamp Brook @ Boston Post Road, Mamaroneck Village, NY	100%	0%	471	3,448
R-MR-3.82	Mamaroneck River @ Saxon Woods Park, White Plains, NY	100%	0%	364	3,654
R-SHR-0.07	Sheldrake River @ Columbus Park, Mamaroneck Village, NY	100%	0%	287	1,071
E-LBb	Little Neck Bay @ Cross Island Ex. & 35th Ave, Queens, NYC, NY	64%	36%	286	10,462

Scores > 104 *Enteroc* are considered unsafe for swimming in marine water. Scores > 61 *Enteroc* are considered unsafe for swimming in freshwater.

Average (GeoMean) > 35 *Enteroc* are considered unsafe for swimming in marine water. Average (GeoMean) > 33 *Enteroc* are considered unsafe for swimming in freshwater.

Save the Sound encourages all members of the public to be on the lookout for water pollution and report anything they see to their local health authorities and to Save the Sound at [pollution@savethesound.org](mailto:pollution@savethesound.org). As long as rivers, streams, and our coastline are still polluted, Save the Sound remains committed to restoring water quality where people swim, fish, and paddle.

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*CFE/Save the Sound has an established 45-year track record of restoring and protecting the waters and shorelines of the Sound. From its offices in New Haven and Mamaroneck, Save the Sound works for a cleaner, healthier, and more vibrant Long Island Sound where humans and marine life can prosper year-round. Our success is based on scientific knowledge, legal expertise, and thousands of ordinary people teaming up achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.*