

Can I swim here?

State of the Environment Report Card 2016

Can I swim here?



How we check it's safe to swim

Hawke's Bay has great beaches and rivers to enjoy. However, these waterways can at times become contaminated with faecal material from animals and birds.

To help people make informed decisions about where they chose to swim, HBRC monitors popular recreational areas weekly throughout summer, and lets people know when the water quality in these areas is 'safe for swimming'.

At the end of the season, HBRC calculates the "Suitability for Recreation Grade" for each of the swim spots we monitor. It combines the weekly sampling over the previous five years, with a catchment risk assessment to produce a grade between "Very Good" and "Very Poor".

Monitoring sites



15
swim spots are considered Good – Very Good for swimming

11
swim spots are considered Poor – Very Poor for swimming

QUICK FACTS

HBRC samples 34 popular swimming spots over summer

Check LAWA website (www.lawa.org.nz) to see if you're good to go at your favourite swim spot



Suitability for recreation grade

- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very Poor

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Hawke's Bay has superb coastal beaches and rivers for swimming and water sports.

Our science team monitors water quality at popular recreational water spots over summer so you can check if you're good to go at your favourite swim spot.

More than 30 sites are monitored weekly by HBRC environmental science staff for their suitability for swimming through a 20 week programme from the first week in November to mid-March every summer. The sites were selected by surveying the public about their favourite swimming spots, and measuring them against the national guidelines.



Photo courtesy Hawke's Bay Today



The water quality at Hawke's Bay beaches is excellent most of the time, with many of our southern and northern coastal beaches rating 'Very Good'.

Our rivers and streams can be more affected by animal waste washed into them after rainfall, and so typically rate as 'Fair'.

Lagoons and coastal streams can have poorer water quality as they are at the end of the catchment. They can also attract a lot of birds, which can push up faecal levels.

RULE OF TOES!

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If it's been raining heavily, our best advice is to stay out of the water for 3 days. A handy guide is if you can't see your toes when standing knee-deep in water, then water quality is not the best for a swim.
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Clive River, Waipuka Stream and Puhokio Stream are generally less suitable for swimming or recreational use, due to higher potential bacteria levels. The Clive River and Puhokio stream are sampled fortnightly as they have permanent signs up warning of the health risks. HBRC, community groups and landowners are working to improve water quality in these places.



Find out more The purpose of HBRC's State of the Environment report is to:

- Report on issues that affect our shared environment
- Help councils and communities set priorities for environment management
- Monitor the effectiveness of how we manage the environment
- Provide information people can use in their decision-making

This report card is part of a series prepared by Hawke's Bay Regional Council. It outlines the high-level results from HBRC's monitoring programme.

For more details, including full technical reports and up to the minute monitoring results visit: www.lawa.org.nz

HAWKE'S BAY
REGIONAL COUNCIL
www.hbrc.govt.nz