



OUR RIVERS & BEACHES

Recreational water quality



Every summer, water quality is monitored at 650 freshwater and coastal swimming spots across New Zealand. Bacteria levels are monitored to show the presence of faecal matter and indicate if there is a health risk from recreational use.

As part of its National Environmental Reporting Programme, the Ministry for the Environment has compiled monitoring results for six summers (2003 to 2009).

Key findings

Current situation (2007 – 2008 and 2008 – 2009)

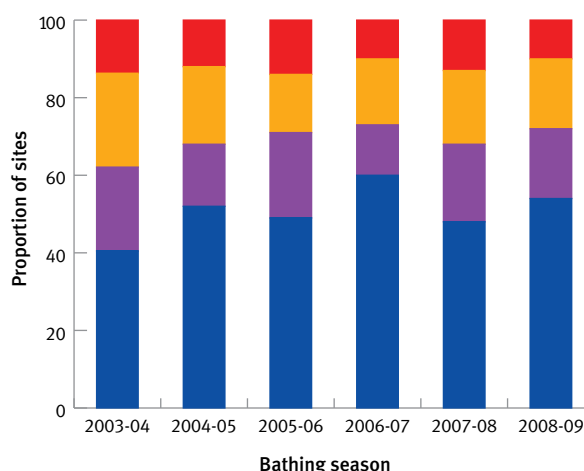
- Fifty-eight per cent of the 300 monitored freshwater swimming spots had water quality that met recreational guidelines almost all of the time. Eight per cent of sites breached the guidelines regularly, indicating that they often had water quality unsuitable for swimming. (See map over page.)
- Seventy-nine per cent of the 400 monitored coastal sites had water quality that met the guidelines almost all of the time. Two per cent of sites breached the guidelines regularly. (See map over page.)

Long-term trends

- Recreational water quality at both freshwater and coastal sites was relatively stable at a national scale between 2003 and 2009.
- Freshwater sites generally have higher levels of bacteria and longer lasting contamination events than coastal beaches. This is largely because faecal matter is more rapidly diluted and dispersed by ocean currents and large volumes of water at the coast.

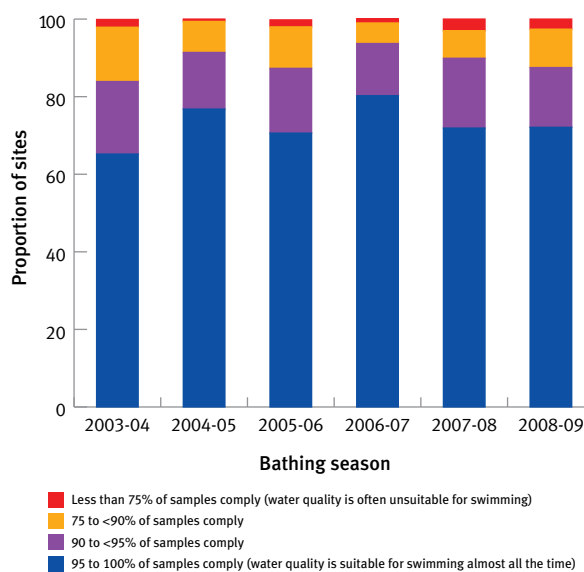
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COMPLIANCE OF MONITORED FRESHWATER SWIMMING SPOTS WITH GUIDELINES FOR CONTACT RECREATION, 2003 – 2009



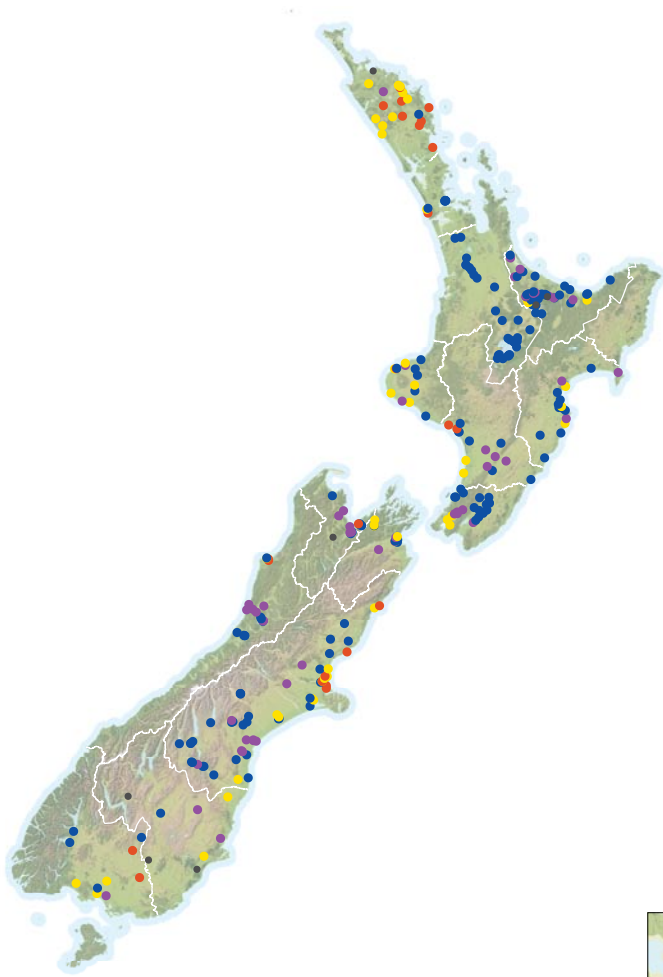
OUR BEACHES

COMPLIANCE OF MONITORED COASTAL SWIMMING SPOTS WITH GUIDELINES FOR CONTACT RECREATION, 2003 – 2009



OUR RIVERS AND LAKES

BACTERIAL WATER QUALITY AT MONITORED FRESHWATER SWIMMING SPOTS, 2007 – 2008 AND 2008 – 2009 SUMMERS



COMPLIANCE WITH GUIDELINES

- Not sufficiently sampled (fewer than 10 samples in total from both summers)
 - Less than 75% of samples comply (water quality is often unsuitable for swimming)
 - 75 to <90% of samples comply
 - 90 to <95% of samples comply
 - 95 to 100% of samples comply (water quality is suitable for swimming almost all the time)
- Regional council boundaries in white

OUR BEACHES

BACTERIAL WATER QUALITY AT MONITORED COASTAL SWIMMING SPOTS, 2007 – 2008 AND 2008 – 2009 SUMMERS

