Water quality at Dorchester’s Tenean Beach meets swimming standards some of the time.

In the last five years, 67% to 91% of water samples have met swimming standards at Tenean Beach. To meet the standard, a single sample must have Enterococcus* levels of less than 104 counts in 100 milliliters (mL) of a beach water sample. Water samples are collected at Tenean Beach and analyzed in a laboratory to determine the Enterococcus counts.

* Enterococcus is a bacteria used as an indicator of fecal contamination in water

Historical Beach Water Quality and Rainfall

Enterococcus is a bacterial indicator of human and animal waste in marine waters, and its presence helps environmental managers determine if conditions might present a public health risk to swimmers. In addition to the single sample standard above, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires that long-term Enterococcus levels are below a long-term standard of 35 counts per 100 mL of water in all recreational swimming areas. Long-term averages at Tenean Beach vary, but have historically been below this threshold, with 2015 and 2019 being exceptions.