



Potomac Interceptor Status Report (July)

Completed pursuant to the 2026 Joint Chairmen's Report, page(s)
273-274

Maryland Department of the Environment

July 6, 2026

Executive Summary

This report provides recent updates regarding water quality monitoring results, the repair status of the interceptor, and ongoing engagement with DC Water.

MDE Water Quality Monitoring Results

In response to the Potomac Interceptor Sewer Overflow, MDE developed a monitoring plan to evaluate bacteria concentrations in the non-shellfish waters of the Potomac River. This monitoring examined *E. coli* and *Enterococcus*, the key bacterial indicators used under EPA's 2012 recreational water quality criteria. Under those criteria, *E. coli* concentrations above 410 MPN/100 mL and *Enterococcus* concentrations above 130 MPN/100 mL indicate potential impairment of recreational uses and possible public health risks.

Six sampling stations (and later eight) were selected within the non-shellfish waters of the Potomac River, extending from upstream of the Potomac Interceptor Overflow to the Potomac River mainstem near Nanjemoy Creek. These were designated as POT-1 to POT-8. Since May, MDE continues testing weekly for *E. coli* at three locations: POT-4 (Chain Bridge Crossing), POT-5 (Little Falls Area), and POT-6 (Old Angler's Inn). The table below shows the results of sampling conducted in June. Additional monitoring results are available, and will continue to be posted at MDE's Potomac Interceptor webpage:

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/Compliance/Pages/Potomac-Interceptor-Sewer-Overflow.aspx>.

Table 1. *E. coli* Sampling Results in June from MDE order from upstream to downstream (left to right in the table).

	Precipitation	POT-6 (Old Angler's Inn) <i>E. coli</i> MPN/100 mL	POT-5 (Little Falls Area) <i>E. coli</i> MPN/100 mL	POT-4 (Chain Bridge) <i>E. coli</i> MPN/100 mL
June 3, 2026	No rain on June 2-3	30	38	17
June 10, 2026	0.0"-0.58" of rain on June 9-10	26	17	20

June 17, 2026	No rain on June 16-17	8	11	9
June 23, 2026	0.10” to 1.0” of rain on June 23	365	54	242
June 29, 2026	0.33” of rain on June 27-28	115	166	61

Sediment Sampling: MDE conducted sediment sampling on June 29, 2026, and the lab results are expected by early to mid-July. These results will be posted on our website and will be provided in the August report. Two prior MDE sampling rounds indicated low levels of bacteria in sediment at all sampled locations except for at Minnie’s Island. The Montgomery County Health Department has narrowed its recreational contact advisory to the shoreline of Minnie’s Island and the area around Lock 10 (the spill site)

Shellfish Harvesting and Drinking Water Assessment: There have been no documented impacts to shellfish waters, drinking water, or aquatic organisms in this area in June.

Regional Water Quality Monitoring Synthesis

This dashboard (<https://potomacinterceptor.dc.gov/>) compiles sampling data from the Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE), DC Water, MDE, U.S. EPA, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the Potomac Riverkeeper Network. DC Water has been conducting daily sampling and DOEE has been conducting weekly sampling of various sites near the point of the interceptor collapse. The dashboard has not been updated with June data from all participating entities, but includes all DC Water, DOEE, and some MDE data between June 1, 2026 and June 28, 2026.

The *E. coli* sampling results from this dashboard are depicted in the charts below. The “Potential Risk” line falls at 410 MPN/100 mL, which is the EPA recommended threshold for assessing recreational activity. The “High” line is at 1532 MPN/100mL, which includes values that are high relative to baseline conditions on the Potomac. These values are two standard deviations above the 15-year historical mean based on DOEE monitoring data from January 2011 to February 2026.

June Sampling Results

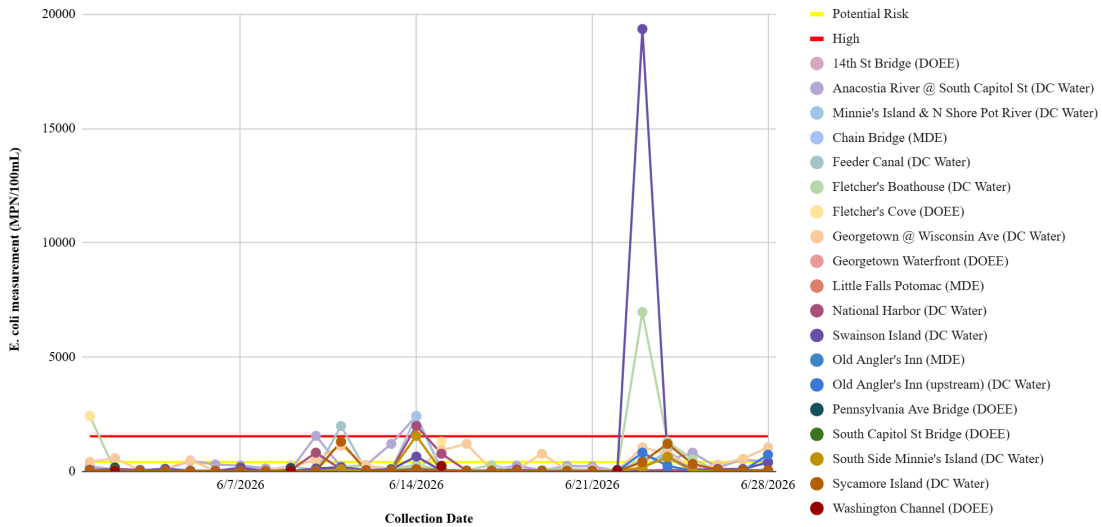


Figure 1. June Sampling Results (All Values)

June Sampling Results

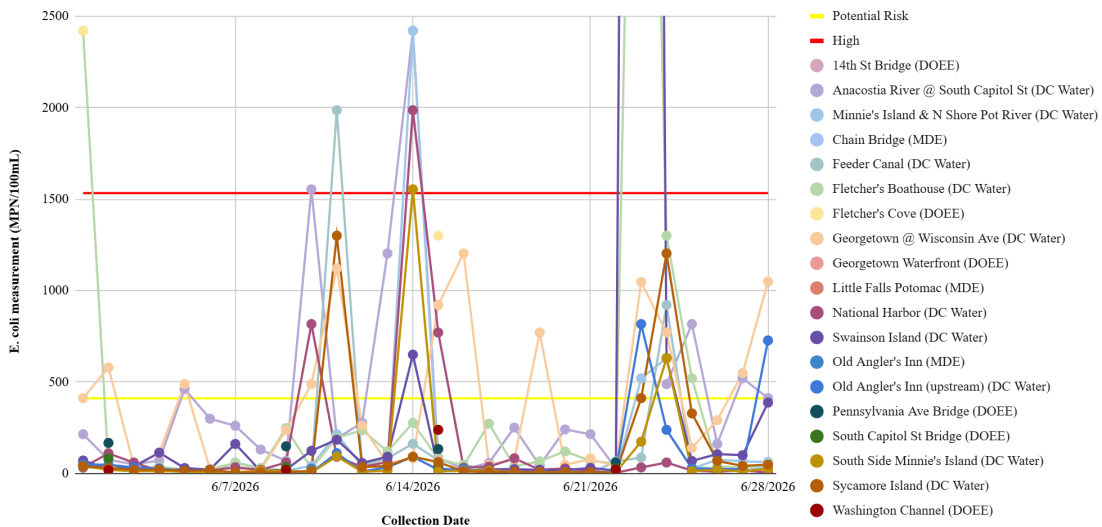


Figure 2. June Sampling Data (Closer View)

As seen in the charts above, the vast majority of *E. coli* measurements fall under the 410 MPN/100 mL limit. There were about ten measurements that were considered “high” relative to baseline conditions on the Potomac. The highest values were recorded on June 23, 2026. According to the [National Weather Service](https://www.weather.gov/wmo), there were .83 inches of rain and thunderstorms on June 22, 2026 in Washington D.C, which likely caused increased

runoff. There was also a spike on June 14, 2026, but there was no precipitation [recorded](#) on June 13, 2026. The third spike was on June 11, 2026, and there [were](#) thunderstorms and .09 inches of rain on June 10, 2026.

DATE SAMPLE TAKEN	4/20/2026		4/27/2026		5/4/2026		5/11/2026		5/18/2026		6/1/2026		6/8/2026		6/22/2026	
LOCATION	E. COLI LEVELS (MPN)	X THE RECREATION LIMIT	E. COLI LEVELS (MPN)	X THE RECREATION LIMIT	E. COLI LEVELS (MPN)	X THE RECREATION LIMIT	E. COLI LEVELS (MPN)	X THE RECREATION LIMIT	E. COLI LEVELS (MPN)	X THE RECREATION LIMIT	E. COLI LEVELS (MPN)	X THE RECREATION LIMIT	E. COLI LEVELS (MPN)	X THE RECREATION LIMIT	E. COLI LEVELS (MPN)	X THE RECREATION LIMIT
Old Angler's Inn (Upstream)	8.5	N/A	12.2	N/A	9.7	N/A	32.8	N/A	7.5	N/A	63.1	N/A	7.5	N/A	7.3	N/A
Potomac River near Cabin John at Lock 10	123.4	N/A	25.6	N/A	34.5	N/A	67.7	N/A	18.9	N/A	79.4	N/A	49.6	N/A	110.6	N/A
Little Falls/ Feeder Canal	13.4	N/A	5.2	N/A	10.9	N/A	6.3	N/A	6.3	N/A	44.1	N/A	13.2	N/A	9.8	N/A
Fletcher's Cove	8.5	N/A	8.5	N/A	290.9	N/A	10.9	N/A	770.1	1.88	613.1	1.49	23.1	N/A	3448	8.41
Thompson Boat Launch	44.1	N/A	2419.6	5.9	6.3	N/A	648.8	1.58	6.3	N/A	42.8	N/A	2419.6	5.9	26.2	N/A
National Harbor	7.5	N/A	20.9	N/A	17.5	N/A	18.7	N/A	<1	N/A	17.1	N/A	11	N/A	16	N/A

Figure 3. Potomac Riverkeeper Network Sampling Results

(<https://potomacriverkeepernetwork.org/potomac-sewage-spill-data-updates/>)

This third figure above illustrates the sampling data provided by the Potomac Riverkeeper Network, taken in partnership with the University of Maryland. Overall, the DC Water, DOEE, and Potomac Riverkeeper data illustrate similar trends to MDE data; bacterial concentrations have largely returned to historic norms with expected spikes related to precipitation events.

Potomac Interceptor Performance and Repair Status

There have been no additional overflows, spills or leakages of sewage at the site of the collapse in June. The permanent sliplining repairs for the section where the collapse occurred are anticipated to be complete in October 2026 and the final repairs to close the pipe openings used for bypass are anticipated to be completed in January 2027.

DC Water identified four additional sections of the Potomac Interceptor that require emergency repairs, two in Maryland and two in Virginia. The locations in Maryland are

the Muddy Creek/Pennyfield Lock area and the DC Line area. The sliplining repairs in these sections are anticipated to be completed in September 2026.

Maryland Ratepayer & Cost Impacts

There have been no documented impacts to Maryland ratepayers resulting from the ongoing response and repair works yet, but it is conceivable that some costs will be passed to users of the Interceptor at a later date, per the long-standing cost-share agreement between DC Water, WSSC, Fairfax Water (Virginia), and other partners. MDE will continue to monitor fiscal impacts alongside DC Water in future monthly updates.

Canal, National Park, and Ecological Restoration

Cleanup in the Canal is ongoing. While bacteria readings are trending down, the rate of decrease in certain areas in the Canal is lower than DC Water would like to see. DC Water is working with the National Park Service to test the application of lime in limited areas to address the bacteria results.

Ongoing Monitoring and Requirements of DC Water

MDE will continue to conduct routine shellfish monitoring. MDE will also continue water quality sampling in areas impacted by the spill, though it may adjust sampling locations and frequency as appropriate. We will post the results of our June 29 sediment sampling as they become available. At this time, we are prolonging our weekly monitoring of *E. coli* at POT-4, 5, and 6. DC Water will continue daily sampling at least through July 31. MDE and DC Water are evaluating data to determine if adjustments to sampling locations and frequencies beyond that time are appropriate.

DC Water submitted a draft [Emergency Repair and Rehabilitation Plan](#) on April 29, 2026. On June 16, 2026, MDE released a [response](#) outlining certain deficiencies in the plan. MDE requested a response and a revised plan or a specific timeline for creating this plan within 30 days.

As part of the plan review and approval process, MDE will require DC Water to implement a long-term verification monitoring program with clearly defined performance standards and success criteria. This program will specify the conditions under which monitoring may be reduced, modified, or concluded, and will include reporting obligations to MDE at regular intervals. More specific details will be provided once the plan is approved and finalized.

Environmental Remediation

This will also be determined by the finalized Emergency Repair and Rehabilitation Plan.

Conclusion

Bacterial levels are steadily normalizing across the Potomac mainstem, and infrastructure repairs remain on track with current schedules. Some exceedances have been reported, generally following anticipated patterns after significant rainfall events. Any further updates will continue to be provided on our website and will be outlined in the August status report.