

FAQs on the City Splash 2025 Swim Cancellation

Why did you have to cancel [City Splash](#) for 2025?

The amount of rainfall experienced this week elevated bacterial counts above acceptable swimming standards, as reflected in water analysis results we received Friday, July 11, and Saturday, July 12, 2025. While cancelling the event is disappointing, our top priority is swimmer health and safety.

How do you conduct testing to ensure the water is safe?

Testing is conducted by our partners at the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. A water sample is taken from the river and an authoritative count of bacterial levels is available approximately 24 hours later. The results we received Friday (which determined if the event could happen Saturday) were derived from a sample taken on Thursday. The results we received on Saturday (which determined if the event could happen Sunday) were derived from a sample taken Friday.

How does rain impact river water?

In a variety of ways, rain can wash human-created pollutants into the river. In addition to the impact of rainfall assessed with testing, regulations from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority dictate that rainfall must stay under 0.5" of accumulation in the 48 hours leading up to a swim in the Charles because of its potential impact to water quality. We have sometimes had to cancel City Splash due to excessive rainfall in this 48-hour period. In this case, we needed to cancel because the rainfall impacted testing results.

Over the last 50 years, investments in infrastructure and climate resilience have significantly reduced—but not eliminated—this problem. While river water tends to return to healthy levels in the days after a major rain event, the Charles River Conservancy is working to ensure river water is safe and clean every day of the year.

Can my friends and I jump into the river on our own this summer?

For important safety reasons, swimming in the Charles is only allowed with the issuance of a Special Event Permit from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Look for other opportunities to cool off this summer: [City of Boston](#), [City of Cambridge](#), and [Massachusetts](#).

How else can I get involved with the Charles River Conservancy?

- [Become a supporter](#): By making a gift to the CRC, you help our work in the parks.
- If you would like to get your hands dirty, [volunteer](#) with us in the parks on maintenance and stewardship projects, like pruning trees and shrubs, planting flower bulbs, trash pickup, and painting benches or railings.
- If public policy and planning is your interest, support our advocacy efforts (announced on social media and in our e-news—sign up [here](#)) by contacting public and elected officials about specific and current park/river issues.
- If you and your colleagues are interested in team building, getting outside, and working on a specific stewardship project in the parks, encourage your company to [become a corporate partner](#).