



# *Town of Darien*

David Knauf, MPH, MS, RS

Director of Health

e-mail: [dknauf@darienct.gov](mailto:dknauf@darienct.gov)

Barrington Bogle, MPH, RS, CHES

Assistant Director of Health

e-mail: [bbogle@darienct.gov](mailto:bbogle@darienct.gov)

## **Public Beaches in 2011**

Again this year, the Department maintained a consistent pattern of water sampling four days a week from Memorial Day to Labor Day at Weed and Pear Tree Point beaches. This was part of a determined effort to understand fluctuations in the bacterial counts noted in previous years at our beaches. The influence of tides and precipitation was evaluated and it was found that the water quality of Long Island Sound met EPA standards for bathing waters regardless of whether it was high or low tide. A key finding was that upstream water sources appeared to be a contributing factor to bacteria levels, especially after precipitation events. Bacteria in Goodwives River were further evaluated utilizing DNA testing and it was found that human sewage is not contributing to elevated counts indicating that the source is most likely wildlife and urban runoff. Consequently the existing policy of “preemptive” closure of beaches after rain will remain in effect. The good news is that the beaches were never closed to elevated bacteria counts for the third year in a row.

The telephone HOTLINE (203-656-7323) provides information regarding the status of our beaches.