**Water Quality in Your Community**

Select a neighborhood or community where you are interested in learning more about the water quality. Using online tools, determine if the water is suitable for swimming, fish consumption, shellfish harvesting and supporting aquatic life

1. Swimming: Use the [Swim Guide](https://www.theswimguide.org/find/) or [S.C. Beach Access Guide](https://gis.dhec.sc.gov/beachaccess/) to locate the nearest swim sampling station to your community.
   1. Is this area suitable for swimming?
   2. Which pollutant can make it unsafe to swim?
2. Fish Consumption: Use the [SC Watershed Atlas](https://gis.dhec.sc.gov/watersheds/) to determine if there are any nearby advisories. Layers to use: Water Advisories > Fish Consumption Advisory – Streams, Fish Consumption Advisory – Lakes
   1. Are there any advisories nearby?
   2. Use the [Fish Consumption Advisory Table](https://www.scdhec.gov/food-safety/food-monitoring-advisories/fish-consumption-advisories) to learn which species are under advisory.
3. Shellfish Harvesting: Use the SC Watershed Atlas to determine if SCHEC classifies the water as safe to harvest shellfish from. Layers to use: Water Quality Assessments > Shellfish Harvest Classifications
   1. Are there approved (gray) areas nearby?
   2. Use the [SCDNR Recreational Shellfish Map Application](https://scdnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=cbef2c2a0f9449fa87dd25c7117ad865) to make sure it’s legal to harvest. What is the closest, legal and safe shellfish ground to harvest from?
4. Aquatic Life Support: Use the SC Watershed Atlas to see if there are any water quality issues that might be harmful to aquatic life. Layers to use: Water Quality Assessments > 2016 Use Support and Trends > Stations, Water Quality Assessments > Impaired Waters- 303(d) > select any years
   1. Are there any nearby issues (red stations or dots for impaired waters)? Which pollutants are a problem?

Causes and Solutions

1. Explore the 10-Digit Watershed for problems. Layers to use: Nat’l Watershed Boundaries: 10-Digit Watersheds. Click on the watershed for more information
   1. Is the watershed very urbanized?
2. Look for pollution permits. Layers to use: SCDHEC Regulated Permits (Anything labelled withdrawal is not a pollution permit)
   1. What kinds of permits are near your community?
   2. Could this activity be causing problems?
3. Are there any plans in place to reduce pollution? Layers to use: Nonpoint Source Program > Watershed Based Plans, Section 319 Grant Projects.
4. What can residents do to keep water clean?