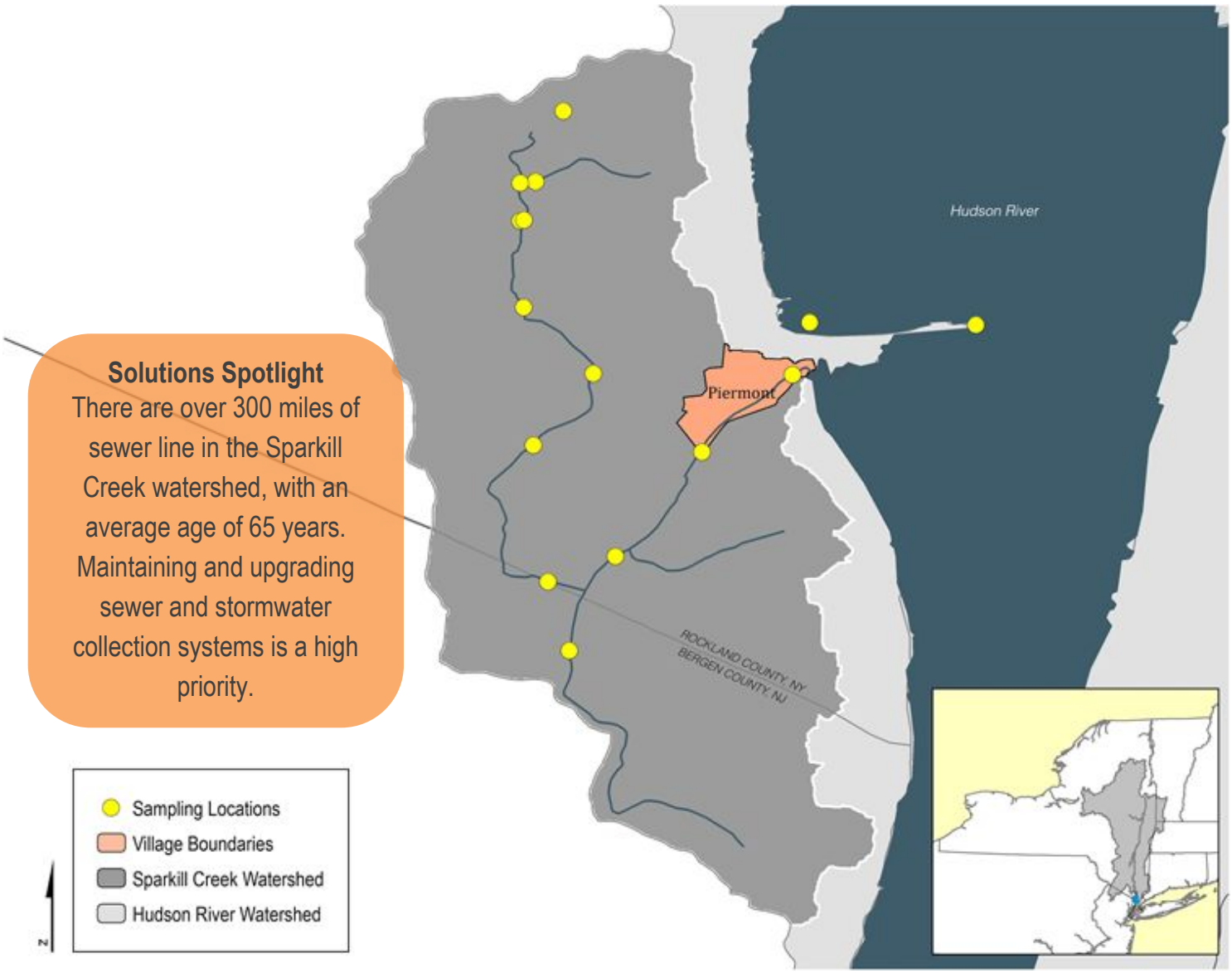
# SPARKILL CREEK

## Community Water Quality Monitoring Results 2012-2019



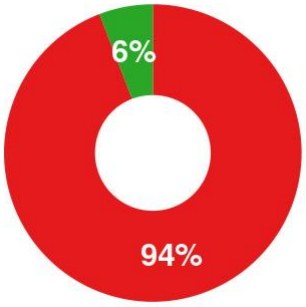

**Solutions Spotlight**

There are over 300 miles of sewer line in the Sparkill Creek watershed, with an average age of 65 years. Maintaining and upgrading sewer and stormwater collection systems is a high priority.

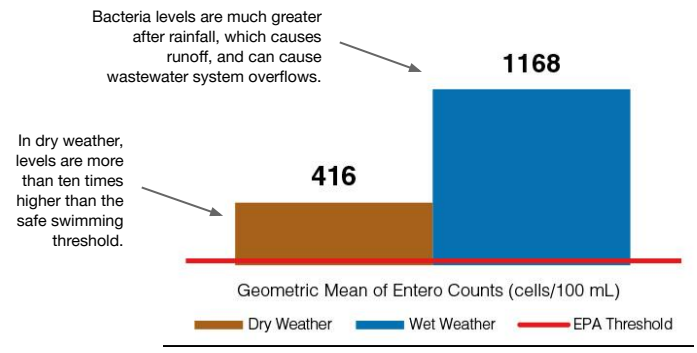
## What the Data Show

### What portion of samples were safe for swimming?

Samples collected at non-tidal sites only occasionally met the EPA guideline for safe swimming.




### How high were the bacteria levels?




**More**: Explore a watershed map, data from each sampling site, year-to-year patterns and other info at [www.riverkeeper.org/water-quality/citizen-data/sparkill-creek](www.riverkeeper.org/water-quality/citizen-data/sparkill-creek).
Learn about the Sparkill Creek Watershed Alliance at [www.sparkillcreek.org/](www.sparkillcreek.org/).

# Sparkill Creek Water Quality 2012-2019

## Community Science

The water quality data presented here are based on an analysis of 646 samples collected since 2012 by Sparkill Creek Watershed Alliance. Samples are collected monthly (May to October) and processed at Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. To get involved, contact Sebastian Pillitteri at spillitteri@riverkeeper.org.

### Why We Measure Bacteria

Fecal indicator bacteria such as *Enterococcus* ("Entero") usually do not make us sick. But because they live in the guts of warm-blooded animals, when these bacteria are present in water, pathogens that can make us sick may also be present.

Sources of fecal bacteria may include sewer overflows and failures, inadequate sewage treatment, urban or farm runoff, septic system failures, wildlife and contaminated sediment.

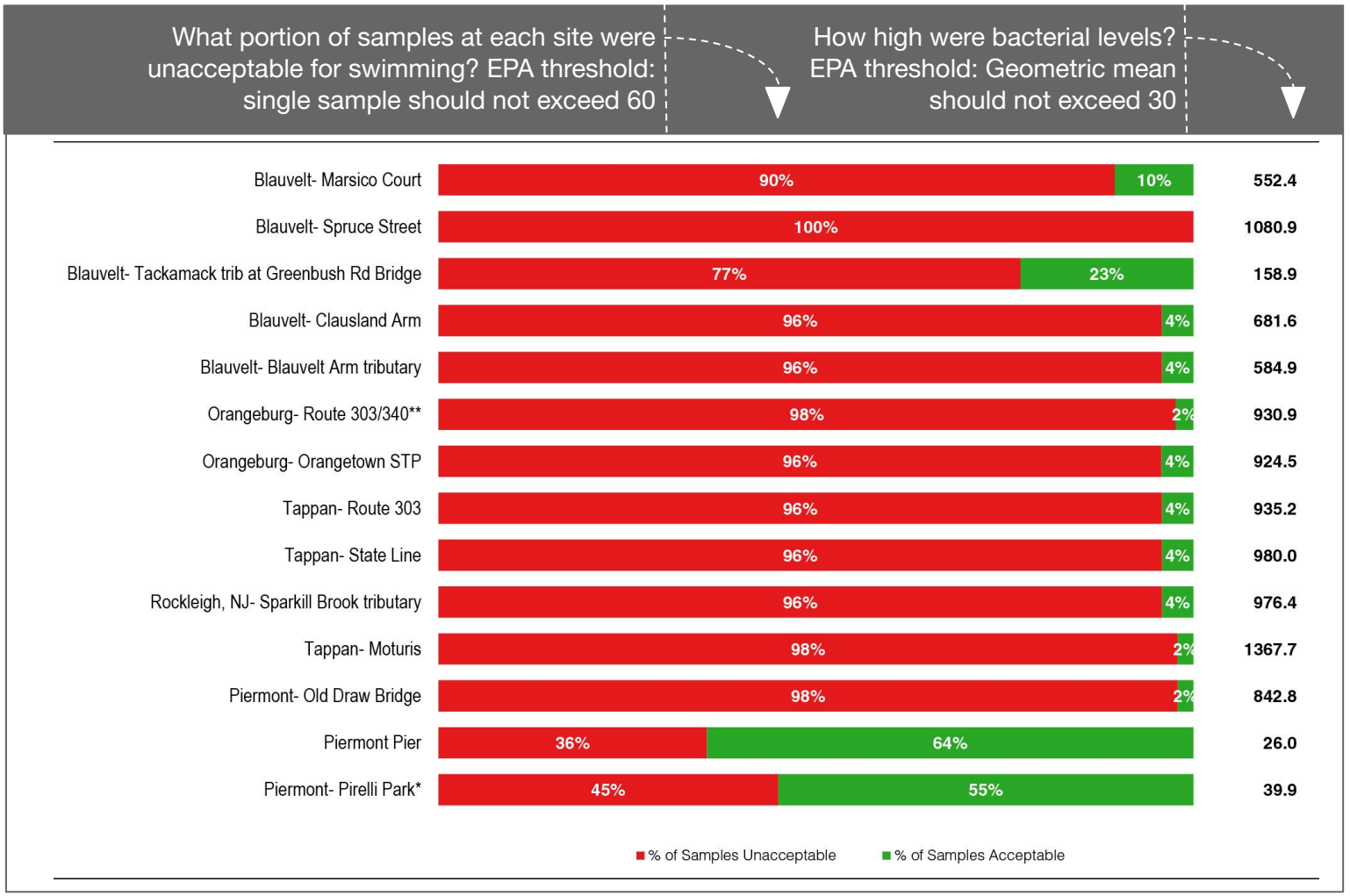
While research continues, the EPA has set thresholds to define if water is safe for swimming based on decades of science relying on measurements of these bacteria. Data are shown in Entero cells per 100 mL.

## About the Sparkill Creek

After flowing through neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas in New York and New Jersey, the Sparkill Creek feeds Piermont Marsh, one of the four wetlands that make up the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve.

## Signs of Progress

In 2020, through a grant from the Hudson River Estuary Program, Riverkeeper will work with Sparkill Creek Watershed Alliance and other partners to begin a two-year water quality assessment to update New York State's Waterbody Inventory, the basis for many programs and grants for water quality improvement.




*Sampling at this site began in 2013. **This site was not sampled in 2017.

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