Mashpee Environmental Coalition



Environmental News

Upcoming Events

Thursday, September 10, 2026 - Starting at 4pm
Mashpee Environmental Coalition (MEC) Annual Meeting
Via Zoom
Discussion topics include the year in review, goals for the coming year, and election of officers, with the September Board Meeting immediately following. All are welcome. To attend, please contact info@mashpeemec.us by noon on September 10th so the Zoom link can be sent prior to the meeting.

Thursday, September 10, 2026 - Starting at 6pm
Upper Cape Cod Regional Open Space Plan Meeting
Sandwich Center for Active Living, 70 Quaker Meetinghouse Road, Sandwich
Join the Cape Cod Commission to learn about their **efforts to protect open space and natural resources** as part of their 2025 Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan (RPP). The regional plan aims at supporting local open space planning processes and will align with goals and objectives for the region. In conjunction with this, please **take their online survey, available here**. **Your voice matters, make it heard!**

September 13 - 19, 2026, Cape Cod Clean Water Week
Hosted by the Barnstable County Clean Water Center, this Cape-wide celebration will bring together residents, visitors, scientists, policymakers, non-profits, pond groups, land trusts, students and more to raise awareness about water quality issues, while inspiring meaningful action. Throughout the week, attendees can participate in a range of activities at the Clean Water Center and at partner sites, including **educational workshops, guided nature walks, lectures, films, and celebrations.** The full program listing is available **here**.

Tuesday, September 15, 2026 - 10am-11:15am
Climate Resilience: A Bog Restoration Walk
Marstons Mills River Headwaters (meeting location will be shared upon registering)
Join Barnstable Land Trust and Barnstable Clean Water Coalition (BCWC) staff on a tour of BCWC's historic 1800's cranberry bogs at the headwaters of the Marstons Mills River. Learn about BCWC's ongoing wetlands restoration work to remove nitrogen flowing downriver through 64 acres of bogs and how this bog system provides an opportunity to improve water quality and create a climate resilient landscape in the Three Bays estuary. Pre-registration is required **here**.

Wednesday, September 16, 2026 - 10am
Mashpee-Wakeby Boat Ramp Ribbon Cutting
State Boat Ramp, Fisherman's Landing, Mashpee (off Rt 130)
State and local partners will be on hand to celebrate improvements to the state boat ramp and offer a **tour of the green stormwater infrastructure system**. All are welcome.

Saturday, September 19, 2026 - 1pm-4pm
Experience Your Estuary: Waquoit Bay!
Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR), 131 Waquoit Hwy (Rt 28)
This celebration with WBNERR staff members and partners will highlight Waquoit Bay's beauty, recreational opportunities, and incredible ecosystem. Additional details and a registration link may be found **here**.

Let's Take a Hike

Saturday, September 12, 2026, Santuit Pond Preserve - 9am
Saturday, September 19, 2026, Mashpee River Woodlands (North) - 9am
Saturday, September 26, 2026, Child's River Conservation Area - 9am
Guided nature tours, sponsored by the Mashpee Conservation Department, are offered each month free-of-charge. Registration is not required, but stormy weather may cancel. **For directions and information about these walks**, and those in the coming months, click on the "Guided Nature Tour Schedule" link along the left-hand margin at https://www.mashpeema.gov/1456/conservation-commission or call (508) 539-1400, ext. 8538.

MEC's Textile Drive a Huge Success

Our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in the August 22nd Household Hazardous Waste (HHW), Secure Shredding, and Textile Recycling Event. Although the quantity of dropped off HHW products and documents is not yet known, we are pleased to announce that **5,500 lbs. of textiles were collected that day**. This means that since 2023, when MEC first began semiannual textile drives (every April and August), **a grand total of 27,000 lbs. of textiles have been kept out of our landfill!**

Given the fact that **an estimated 95% of all donated textiles can either be reused or repurposed**, this is indeed good news for all who might benefit, as well as our planet. We hope to be back again in April 2027, when we will gladly accept **all unwanted textile items** that you might accumulate between now and then – **in any condition** as long as they are clean and bagged.

A special "Shout Out" to volunteers Arden, Eddy, Irene, Len, Lisa, and Phyllis for their hard work throughout our event. Thanks also to Mashpee DPW and Bay State Textiles for being such great partners -- and again to everyone that day who helped protect our landfill and waters!

Please Remember: Textile Recycling is Now the Law!

Additional Information Items

Waterways in the News

Based on 9/1/2026 water sampling by the Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC), both **Ashumet Pond** and **Santuit Pond** are currently listed with a cyanobacteria **"Potential for Concern" advisory**. Please be safe and avoid contact with the water!

Mashpee Septic System Regulation Changes Under Review

At the September 2nd meeting of the Mashpee Board of Health, proposed changes to the **Innovative/Alternative On-site Septic Systems Regulations** were discussed. Many in attendance who made public comment urged even stricter regulations near waterways. As a vote was not taken, discussions will continue at a future meeting. The **Proposed Regulation** may be read **here**.

Barnstable County Commissioners Elevate Water Supply as Regional Priority

The **Cape's drinking water supply** will now be a regional priority for Barnstable County Commissioners, following recent discussions with Harwich and Falmouth about **increasing pressures on drinking water supplies** due to drought, heavy summer demand, and continued growth. A summary of their August 12th meeting may be found **here**.

Cyanobacteria - All There is to Know

APCC has developed a multi-part information series regarding that dreaded word for ponds and waterways - **Cyanobacteria**. To learn more about **causes, testing techniques, and risks**, the entire series may be accessed **here**.

Cape Cod's Drought - Still at Level 2

As of August 7, 2026, Cape Cod remains at a **Level 2 "Significant Drought"** status. Residents are urged to continue conserving water, both indoors and outside. Latest drought updates may be found at the **MA Drought Status website**.

In Case You Missed It

Mashpee Ponds Now Have a Voice

The Mashpee Enterprise recently launched a new column, called "Pondemonium" - a column all about Mashpee's ponds. Columnist and Mashpee Freshwater Ponds Committee Member, Amy DuFault, describes it as follows: "Pondemonium" is a monthly dive into the ponds that define Mashpee and an attempt to understand the confusion surrounding the ecological and social forces affecting each pond and its future. . . . At its core, it is about awareness and action and a reminder of what we stand to lose, and what we can still protect together. If you have a story to share, please contact Amy at hello@amydufault.com. For the latest column about Santuit Pond, click **here**.

State of the Ponds Presentation

Learn about the current state of Mashpee's four major ponds, as presented on July 21, 2026, sponsored by the Mashpee Freshwater Ponds Committee. Speakers include Town Officials Ashley Fisher and Dan Kent, along with Julie Hambrook from APCC, Ed Eichner from SMAST and TMDL Solutions, and Danica Belknap, the Mashpee Wampanoag Liaison from SNEP (Southeast New England Program). The recording is available **here**.

Mashpee's Stormwater Management Program Update

The Town's ongoing Stormwater Management Program was highlighted at the June 1st Select Board Meeting by DPW Director Catherine Laurent and a consultant from Tighe & Bond. Current stormwater projects at **Mashpee-Wakeby Pond** and **Santuit Pond** were reviewed, and next steps were discussed. The recording of this 35-minute presentation is available **here**, starting just past minute 45.

Cape Cod Groundwater Presentation

As part of Groundwater Awareness Week this past March, MASSTC (The Massachusetts Alternative Septic System Technology Center) recently hosted a talk on **Groundwater's Role in Cape Cod's Freshwater Resources**. The video of this informative program may be viewed **here**.

MEC's Chemical-Free Yard Sign Campaign

Since April 2025, MEC's **Chemical-Free Cape Cod Yard Sign Campaign** has been in full swing, aimed at promoting Chemical-Free Yards that are safe for our Children, Pets, Waters - and Nature as a whole.

Already, our signs are proudly being displayed in yards across Cape Cod, including Barnstable, Dennis, Falmouth, Mashpee, Pocasset, and Sandwich. Thanks to all who have chosen to set an example for their friends, neighbors, and local associations - by helping to save our environment, one yard at a time!



Information on how to join our campaign may be found **here**.

Reminders

Pond Cyanobacteria Monitoring and Alert Program

APCC is continuing its **Cyanobacteria Monitoring Program**, which includes testing the waters of Mashpee's **Ashumet**, **Johns**, **Mashpee-Wakeby**, and **Santuit Ponds**. **To receive email alerts** as soon as they are issued, and to view the interactive map with up-to-date findings, please go to **apcc.org/cyano**.

Cape-Wide Conservation Calendar of Events

The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts and its nonprofit members publish updates to their online **Regional Calendar of Events** on an ongoing basis. This Conservation Calendar includes programs from villages and towns across Cape Cod, encouraging both visitors and residents to take part in nature and environmental events. The wide list of current programs may be accessed at: www.blt.org/capeconservationcalendar.

Cape Cod Freshwater Strategy Report - Ponds and Lakes

The Cape Cod Commission finalized its **Cape Cod Freshwater Strategy Report** last summer. This guide outlines a data-driven approach to evaluating, protecting, and restoring Cape Cod's ponds and lakes, and a framework for improving their overall health. Additional information and the report itself may be found here.

State of the Waters: Cape Cod 2025 Report

In December, the Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) released its latest data regarding Cape Cod's **State of the Waters** in our estuaries, ponds, and municipal water supplies. Details may be found at: https://capecodwaters.org/.

Textile Recycling is Now Mandatory - It's the Law!

Due to the solid waste crisis in Massachusetts, effective November 2022, it is **now illegal to discard any clothing or other textile item in the trash**, even if stained, ripped, threadbare, or one of a pair. This includes footwear, bedding, table linens, accessories such as belts and scarves, and even stuffed animals for children and pets. The full list of textile items that must now be recycled is available **here**, courtesy of Bay State Textiles. To assist residents in complying with this law, **MEC now sponsors textile recycling drives twice each year** — in **April** as an Earth Day event, and in **August** alongside the County's Hazardous Waste Dropoff. Exact dates and times for each April and August event, once known, will be posted in our newsletters and at www.mashpeemec.us.

River Restoration Projects

Under the program name, "**Source to Sea,**" projects continue which aim to help restore the health of the **Mashpee River**, **Quashnet River**, and **Red Brook**. To learn more, information may be found at: https://waquoitbayreserve.org/coastal-training-programs/source-to-sea

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Please share this newsletter with your friends, colleagues, and neighbors who may have an interest in this information.
Our thanks to each of you for your own efforts on behalf of our town, our region, and the environment!

To Join or Donate

Our Board meets the 2nd Thursday of each Month (January - November) via Zoom starting at 4pm, and our Annual Meeting immediately precedes the September Board Meeting. All are welcome.

The Mashpee Environmental Coalition (MEC) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization – dedicated to educating and advocating on behalf of our natural resources for over 25 years.

info@mashpeemec.us | www.mashpeemec.us

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