

# Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment



Matthew Rodriguez  
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Edmund G. Brown Jr.  
Governor

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Charlton H. Bonham, Director  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
1416 Ninth Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95814

**FROM:** Lauren Zeise, Ph.D.,  
Director 

**DATE:** December 29, 2017

**SUBJECT:** RECOMMENDATION TO OPEN THE COMMERCIAL LOBSTER  
FISHERY NEAR SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

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The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), has determined that consumption of lobster taken from state waters near the southeast side of Santa Cruz Island (Santa Barbara County), specifically Block 708 (defined below), no longer poses a significant threat for domoic acid exposure. OEHHA and CDPH recommend that this portion of the commercial lobster fishery be opened. This determination is based on data from samplings of lobster and analysis of these samples by CDPH laboratories.

Block 708, the specific area recommended for reopening, is on the southeast side of Santa Cruz Island with the following boundaries: east of 119°40.000' W. longitude, west of 119° 30.00' W. longitude, and south of 34°00.000' N. latitude.

OEHHA recommends that the closure remain in effect in all state waters in Blocks 685 and 707. Block 685 is at the northeast end of Santa Cruz Island with the following boundaries: east of 119°40.000' W. longitude, west of 119° 30.00' W. longitude, and north of 34°00.000' N. latitude. Block 707 is at the south side of Anacapa Island with the following boundaries: east of 119°30.000' W. longitude, west of 119°20.000' W. longitude, and south of 34°00.000' N. latitude.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CDPH, and OEHHA are continuing to monitor and analyze lobster to determine when the remaining closed areas of Santa Cruz and Anacapa Islands can be opened safely.

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**California Environmental Protection Agency**

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Charlton H. Bonham  
December 29, 2017  
Page 2

Domoic acid poisoning in humans may occur within minutes to hours after consumption of affected seafood and can result in signs and symptoms ranging from vomiting and diarrhea to permanent loss of short-term memory (Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning), coma, or death.

Current federal action levels for domoic acid are 20 parts per million (ppm) for all fish, with the exception of 30 ppm in the viscera of Dungeness crabs. State and federal laws prohibit the commercial distribution of seafood products that contain domoic acid above the action level.

While the recreational fishery remains open, CDPH and OEHHA strongly recommend that consumers avoid eating the viscera (internal organs, also known as “butter” or “guts”) of lobster or crabs, as the viscera usually contain much higher levels of domoic acid than the meat.

If you have questions, please contact me at [Lauren.Zeise@oehha.ca.gov](mailto:Lauren.Zeise@oehha.ca.gov) or (916) 322-6325.

### Lobster Sampling Results

PORT	AREA	SAMPLE COLLECTION DATE	NUMBER OF SAMPLES	VISCERA SAMPLE RESULTS:	AVERAGE LEVEL IN VISCERA	SAMPLES EXCEEDING ACTION	
Ventura	Port Hueneme (Block 664)	11/14/2017	1	3.5 ppm	3.5 ppm	0%	
Channel Islands	Anacapa Island (Block 684)	10/26/2017	6	< 2.5 - 8.4 ppm	2 ppm	0%	
	Santa Cruz Island (Block 685)	9/29/2017	4	2.9 - 730.0 ppm	226.6 ppm	50%	
		10/25/2017	7	< 2.5 - 89 ppm	42.1 ppm	71%	
		11/02/2017	6	< 2.5 - 140.0 ppm	52.7 ppm	50%	
		11/27/2017	6	< 2.5 - 21 ppm	4.0 ppm	17%	
		12/09/2017	6	< 2.5 - 11 ppm	1.8 ppm	0%	
		12/19/2017	6	6.2 - 37 ppm	17.6 ppm	33%	
		Santa Cruz Island (Block 708)	11/03/2017	6	< 2.5 - 110.0 ppm	29.1 ppm	50%
	11/30/2017		6	< 2.5 - 21.0 ppm	4.0 ppm	17%	
	12/13/2017		6	< 2.5 - 4.4 ppm	1.8 ppm	0%	
	12/21/2017		6	< 2.5 - 2.9 ppm	0.5 ppm	0%	
	Santa Cruz Island (Block 709)	11/14/2017	3	< 2.5 - 18 ppm	6.0 ppm	0%	
	San Diego	Scripps Pier (Block 842)	9/29/2017	6	Non-detectable	Non-detectable	0%