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### **Bay Area Shoreline Fishing Closure in Effect until Determined Safe to Reopen**

Alameda, Calif. – The closure of the fishing and shellfish harvesting in oil affected areas will continue until the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and Department of Fish and Game (DFG) determine it safe to reopen.

Closure areas include the Alameda County shoreline between the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and the San Mateo Bridge. In addition, OEHHA advises that fishers avoid fishing in areas where there is a visible sheen.

“Protecting the public’s health is our top priority,” said OEHHA Director Joan Denton. “It’s a good idea to avoid any fish from the spill area until further notice.”

OEHHA is the science arm of the California Environmental Protection Agency and is working with DFG, the Department of Public Health and other agencies to assess impacts of the oil spill on the fisheries.

OEHHA’s safety guidelines call for avoiding consumption of any fish or shellfish from the spill area until analysis of the collected samples is completed. Visible oil or oily smell are obvious indications of contamination, but fish and shellfish from the spill area could still pose a potential risk even if there are no visible signs of contamination.

Fish and shellfish caught from waters outside the spill area remain as safe to eat as before the spill, but marine life from the spill area should be avoided until the evaluation of its safety is completed. In addition, health officials are asking people to stay away from shore areas until cleanup efforts are completed.

OEHHA has issued the following safety advice for beaches in the spill area: Avoid direct contact with spilled oil, which can cause skin irritation. Prolonged contact can cause rashes. If you get oil or tar on your skin, wash it off with soap and water, and be certain to wash your hands before eating.

If you get oil on your clothing, wash it in the usual way. There is no need to use harsh detergents, solvents or other chemicals to wash oil from skin or clothing.

Do not burn driftwood or other debris that may be contaminated with oil. Use common sense. Do not swim in water with an oil slick and do not swallow water from the area. Oil-contaminated water can cause choking and lead to severe pneumonia if it gets into the lungs.

There is no risk of adverse health effects from breathing air near spilled oil unless there is prolonged exposure to fumes.

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