



Gavin Newsom, Governor
Yana Garcia, Secretary for Environmental Protection
Lauren Zeise, Ph.D., Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Charlton H. Bonham, Director
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
715 P Street
Sacramento, California 95814

FROM: Lauren Zeise, Ph.D. Lauren Zeise
Director Lauren Zeise (May 2, 2024 08:13 PDT)

DATE: May 2, 2024

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO CLOSE THE RECREATIONAL RAZOR CLAM FISHERY IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), has determined that consumption of razor clams taken from Humboldt County poses a significant threat for domoic acid exposure. OEHHA, in consultation with CDPH, therefore recommends that the recreational razor clam fishery be closed in Humboldt County. This recommendation is based on a finding of elevated levels of domoic acid in the meat of razor clams that were collected from this area and analyzed by CDPH laboratories, as shown in the table below.

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 and shellfish, with the exception of > 30 ppm for the viscera of Dungeness crabs. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), CDPH, and OEHHA will collect, monitor, and analyze razor clams to determine when the recreational razor clam fishery in Humboldt County can be re-opened safely.

The CDFW fisheries closure remains in place for the recreational razor clam fishery in Del Norte County.¹

If you have questions, please contact me at Lauren.Zeise@oehha.ca.gov or Dr. Wes Smith at Wesley.Smith@oehha.ca.gov.

Razor Clam Sampling Results

COUNTY	LOCATION	SAMPLE COLLECTION DATE	TISSUE TYPE	DOMOIC ACID (ppm) ^{***}
Humboldt	Clam Beach	04/24/2024	Meat*	57
			Meat**	23
			Meat**	16

* Composite sample of three individual clams.

** Composite sample of four individual clams.

*** The action level for razor clam meat is ≥ 20 ppm.

cc: June Weintraub, Sci.D.
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¹ California Department of Fish and Wildlife declaration of public health fisheries closure, online at <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=216807&inline>