

Recreational or Sport Shellfishing

Is it safe to harvest and eat my own oysters, clams, and mussels?

Most coastal states, counties, or cities provide and monitor areas for recreational public harvesting of oysters, clams, or mussels. Water and/or shellfish in these harvest areas are routinely tested * to ensure they do not contain bacteria or viruses from sewage, toxins from natural algal blooms, or other contaminants that can cause human illness. If harmful contaminants are present, the area is closed to harvesting and signs are posted to warn of the danger.

Some states may require a permit and/or licenses to recreationally harvest shellfish and/or set limits on the amount you may harvest. Check with the department or agency responsible for monitoring public harvest areas in your state, county, or city or use the links below to locate information by state.

Alabama: www.outdooralabama.com/fishing/saltwater/regulations

California: Quarantines and Health Advisories for Sport-Harvested Shellfish
(www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/environmental/Shellfish/default.htm)

Sport Fishing Regulations, Licenses & Tags (www.dfg.ca.gov/)

Shellfish Information Hotline: 1-800-553-4133

Connecticut: www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=1369&q=259178

Delaware: www.fw.delaware.gov/Fisheries/FishingInfo.htm

Florida: myfwc.com/marine/recreational/recshellfish.htm

Georgia: crd.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=299

Louisiana: www.wlf.state.la.us/apps/netgear/index.asp?cn=lawlf&pid=101

Maine: www.maine.gov/dmr/rm/public_health/closures/shellfishhotline.htm

Maryland: www.dnr.state.md.us/fisheries/regulations/recregchrt.html

Massachusetts: www.mass.gov/dfwele/dmf/recreationalfishing/rec_index.htm#shellfish

Mississippi: www.dmr.state.ms.us

New Hampshire: www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/shellfish/

New Jersey: www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/saltwater.htm

New York: www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/marine/shellfish/index.html

North Carolina: www.ncfisheries.net/recreational/recguide.htm

Oregon: www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/regulations/sport_shellfish/

Rhode Island: www.dem.ri.gov/topics/mftopics.htm

South Carolina: www.dnr.state.sc.us/marine/shellfish/regs.html

Texas: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/annual/fish/oysterreg/

Virginia: www.vdh.state.va.us/shellfish/index.asp

Washington: wdfw.wa.gov/fishcorn.htm

* **NOTE:** Since *Vibrio* bacteria are naturally present in marine waters and are not a serious threat to most consumers, harvest areas are not tested for *Vibrio*. Therefore, it is **not safe for high-risk consumers to eat raw or undercooked oysters, clams, or mussels from either commercial or recreational public harvest areas, even if the area is approved for harvesting.** Thorough cooking of shellfish kills *Vibrio* bacteria. For more information about who is at risk for *Vibrio vulnificus* infection, please visit the website www.SafeOysters.org and read the introduction section for Consumers.