

DEP Temporarily Closes Shellfish Beds Statewide As Precaution Due To Anticipated Impacts From Storms

Friday, October 2, 2015 Tags: [Other](#)



Stay Connected
with Social Media

Stay Connected
with Email Alerts

LIKE THIS PAGE? SHARE IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS.



Trenton, NJ – Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin today issued an Administrative Order temporarily closing state waters to shellfish harvesting effective at sunset as a precaution due to expected heavy rainfall from a pair of weekend storms.

The precautionary closure affects more than 720,000 acres of commercial shellfish beds in the state's ocean waters and estuaries as well as all recreational harvesting. Bivalves in these beds such as clams, oysters and mussels are filter feeders that can accumulate harmful bacteria carried into waterways from the land by stormwater runoff.

The DEP will continue to monitor a Nor'easter expected to continue impacting the state through Saturday, as well as the track of Hurricane Joaquin. The DEP will make further determinations regarding shellfish bed closures as necessary.

The harvest ban applies only to shellfish such as clams, oysters, mussels and scallops, and does not apply to crustaceans, such as crabs. If the storms do not impact the shellfish beds, the Administrative Order will be immediately revoked.

The DEP works with the New Jersey Department of Health and U.S. Food and Drug Administration to ensure that shellfish are safely harvested in state waters. The DEP monitors, classifies and enforces shellfish regulations in 425,830 acres of estuarine beds and 295,857 acres of ocean beds.

The New Jersey Department of Health Food Safety Program regularly inspects shellfish processing plants to ensure they follow regulations that outline health and safety precautions. Shellfish samples are regularly collected from harvest areas, certified shellfish dealers and retailers for bacteriological examination.

The program oversees a certification program which requires all wholesale shellfish dealers to handle, process, and ship shellfish under sanitary conditions and maintain records verifying that the shellfish were obtained from approved areas. For a copy of the Administrative Order, visit: www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bmw/news.html

Press Contact:

609-777-2600

