



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**Division of Marine Fisheries**  
(617) 626-1520 | [mass.gov/MarineFisheries](http://mass.gov/MarineFisheries)



Maura T. Healey  
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Thomas K. O'Shea  
*Commissioner*

Daniel J. McKiernan  
*Director*

March 17, 2026

The Honorable Select Boards and Mayor of the following Commonwealth of Massachusetts coastal municipalities: Mattapoisett, Dartmouth, Fairhaven and New Bedford.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

In accordance with Chapter 130, Section 74A of Massachusetts General Laws, the Division of Marine Fisheries has determined that additional areas of Buzzards Bay including shellfish growing areas BB18, BB19, BB21, BB22, and BB23 in the towns of Fairhaven and Mattapoisett, no longer meet the established criteria for a status of "Open to Shellfishing" due to combined sewer overflow (CSO) discharges associated with heavy rainfall on March 16-17, 2026. Shellfish growing areas BB11, BB12, BB14, and BB16 in the towns of Dartmouth, Fairhaven, and the city of New Bedford, previously closed due to CSO discharges, were also impacted by the additional CSO discharges and remain under an emergency closure. The status of BB18, BB19, BB21, BB22, and BB23 shall be changed to "**Closed to Shellfishing**" effective at **7:30am on 3/17/2026** until further notification is made by the Division of Marine Fisheries.

Under the authority of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 130, Section 74A, the status of the areas identified below shall be changed to "**Closed to Shellfishing**". Digging, harvesting or collecting and/or attempting to dig, harvest or collect shellfish, and the possession of shellfish from the below areas is prohibited until further notice.

Under authority of 322 CMR 7.01 (7) all permits issued thereunder are hereby conditioned to prohibit the taking, selling or possession of shellfish from the areas listed below.

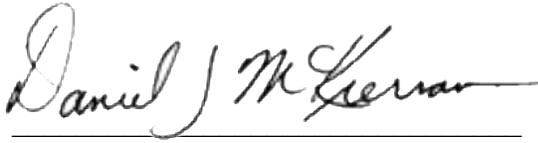
**STATUS: CLOSED TO THE TAKING OF ALL SHELLFISH AS LISTED BELOW**  
**Except for harvest of scallops for adductor muscle only**

The waters, flats and all tributaries of that portion of Buzzards Bay within the following Shellfish Growing Areas and municipalities: BB11, BB12, BB14, BB16 BB18, BB19, BB21, BB22 and BB23, in the towns of Mattapoisett, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, and city of New Bedford.

Individual shellfish growing area definition boundaries are mapped on the Division's website at [Shellfish classification areas | Mass.gov](http://Shellfish%20classification%20areas%20|%20Mass.gov).

These shellfish growing areas shall remain in the “**Closed to Shellfishing**” status until examined by the Division and notification is made that the areas have been placed in the open status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Daniel J. McKiernan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Daniel J. McKiernan, Director  
MA Division of Marine Fisheries

cc: J. Monaghan, R. Forsythe, J. Chapin, MEP  
R. Glenn, C. Petitpas, M. Camisa, DMF  
J. Hobill, DEP  
FDA, DPH  
S. Melo, Dartmouth Shellfish Constable  
T. Ringuette, New Bedford Shellfish Constable  
T. Cox, Fairhaven Shellfish Constable  
I. Perry, Mattapoisett Shellfish Constable