



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

(617) 626-1520 | www.mass.gov/marinefisheries



MAURA T. HEALEY
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Commissioner

DANIEL J. MCKIERNAN
Director

August 18, 2025

Town of Orleans Selectboard
Town Hall
Orleans, MA 02653

Town of Chatham Selectboard
Town Hall
Chatham, MA 02633

Town of Harwich Selectboard
Town Hall
Harwich, MA 02645

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has notified the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) of four cases of ***Vibrio sp.*** single-source illnesses linked to oysters harvested from the Little Pleasant Bay (SC61) shellfish growing area in the Town of Orleans. Oysters linked to these illnesses were harvested between July 1 and July 21, 2025, and consumed raw between July 3 and July 22, 2025. The town of Orleans was notified of the first two illnesses in letters dated July 24 and July 31, 2025.

Under the requirements of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program Model Ordinance, when shellfish are implicated in an illness, the Shellfish Control Authority is required to conduct an investigation to determine whether or not the implicated growing area should be closed to shellfish harvest. Because *Vibrio* bacteria are naturally occurring in coastal waterbodies, *Vibrio* closures are implemented to include hydrographically connected areas. Based on review of these cases DMF has determined that a precautionary 7-day closure of the Pleasant Bay system (growing areas SC52-SC63) is warranted to protect public health. Should additional illnesses be traced to Pleasant Bay the closure could be extended if triggers for mandatory NSSP closures of 14 or 21 days are reached.

Under the authority of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 130, Section 74A, the status of growing areas SC52-SC63 shall be changed to **"Closed to Shellfishing" for oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*) only, effective at 7:00 am on August 18, 2025**. Harvesting or collecting and/or attempting to harvest or collect oysters, and the possession of oysters from these areas is prohibited until further notice.

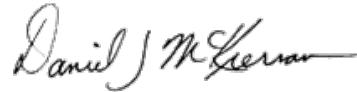
Under authority of 322 CMR § 7.01 (7) all permits issued thereunder are hereby conditioned to prohibit the taking, selling or possession of oysters from SC52-SC63.

DMF and DPH have partnered with industry representatives to develop controls to mitigate the risk of *Vibrio* illness associated with Massachusetts harvested oysters. When the area reopens to harvest, DMF advises that town shellfish control authorities continue to verify harvester compliance with the Massachusetts 2025 *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (*Vp*) Control Plan and Marine Fisheries regulations pertaining to *Vp* management for safe harvest and handling of oysters at 322 CMR § 16.07. Please conduct regular compliance checks using the attached *Vp* Compliance Monitoring Form.

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

Please contact Alex Boeri (alex.boeri@mass.gov) or Christian Petitpas (Christian.petitpas@mass.gov) for additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel J. McKiernan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Daniel J. McKiernan, Director
MA Division of Marine Fisheries

cc: J. Monaghan, J. Chapin, B. Forsythe, MEP
R. Glenn, C. Petitpas, M. Camisa, T. O'Neil, DMF
M. Moore, Hickey, DPH
U.S.FDA
N. Sears, Orleans Shellfish Constable
R. Gagne, Chatham Shellfish Constable
S. Sykes, Harwich Shellfish Constable
Massachusetts Aquaculture Association