

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment



Matthew Rodriguez
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

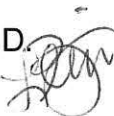
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Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Charlton H. Bonham, Director
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
1416 Ninth Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

FROM: Lauren Zeise, Ph.D.
Director 

DATE: October 24, 2017

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO CLOSE THE COMMERCIAL LOBSTER FISHERY NEAR SANTA CRUZ AND ANACAPA ISLANDS

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), recommends that a portion of the commercial lobster fishery in state waters around Santa Cruz Island (Santa Barbara County) and Anacapa Island (Ventura County) be closed, based on a finding of elevated levels of domoic acid in the viscera of some lobsters collected from these areas. This determination is based on data from samplings of lobster and analysis of these samples by CDPH laboratories. The specific area closed includes all state waters around Santa Cruz and Anacapa Islands east of 119° 40.000' W. longitude, and west of 119° 20.000' W. longitude. State waters extends three nautical miles beyond outmost islands, reefs, and rocks.

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, with the exception of 30 ppm in the viscera of Dungeness crabs. State and federal laws prohibit the commercial distribution of seafood products that contain domoic acid above the action level.

While the recreational fishery remains open, CDPH and OEHHA strongly recommend that consumers avoid eating the viscera (internal organs, also known as "butter" or

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“guts”) of lobster or crabs, as the viscera usually contain much higher levels of domoic acid than the meat.

CDFW, CDPH, and OEHHA are continuing to monitor and analyze lobster to determine when the blocks identified as closed in the area of Santa Cruz and Anacapa Islands can be opened safely.

If you have questions, please contact me at Lauren.Zeise@oehha.ca.gov or (916) 322-6325.

Lobster Sampling Results

PORT	AREA	SAMPLE COLLECTION DATE	NUMBER OF SAMPLES	VISCERA SAMPLE RESULTS: RANGE	AVERAGE LEVEL IN VISCERA	SAMPLES EXCEEDING ACTION LEVEL
Channel Islands	Santa Cruz Island (Block 685)	9/29/17	4	2.9 - 730.0 ppm	226.6 ppm	50%
San Diego	Scripps Pier (Block 842)	9/29/17	6	Non-detectable	Non-detectable	0%