

Razor Clam Fishery opens in Humboldt County

August 23, 2023



The Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has re-opened the recreational razor clam fishery in Humboldt County following a recommendation from state health agencies that consumption of razor clams in the area no longer poses a significant threat for domoic acid exposure.

In April 2023, the razor clam fishery was closed in Humboldt County due to risk of domoic acid exposure. During the closure, state health agencies continued to assess domoic acid levels which consistently exceeded the federal action level for domoic acid of ≥ 20 parts per million (ppm). However, clams collected from Clam Beach, Humboldt County in July 2023 all had domoic acid concentrations lower than this action level.

Domoic acid is a naturally occurring toxin produced by certain types of plankton that can be harmful or even fatal to humans. 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. There is no way to prepare clams that will remove the toxin. Cooking and freezing have no effect.

CDFW reminds clammers that the daily bag limit for razor clams is 20 and the first 20 clams dug must be retained regardless of size or condition. Each person is required to keep a separate container and is not allowed to commingle their clams with another person's when digging and transporting clams.

For more information, please refer to Section 29.20 Clams General and Section 29.45 for specific razor clam regulations.

For more information on any fishery closure information or health advisories, please visit CDFW's Ocean Health Advisories website.

To get the latest information on current fishing season closures related to domoic acid, call CDFW's Domoic Acid Fishery Closure Information Line at (831) 649-2883.

For the latest consumption warnings, call the California Department of Public Health's Biotoxin information Line at (510) 412-4643 or toll-free at (800) 553-4133.