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**DOH WARNS OF POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED SHELLFISH FROM
OREGON AND WASHINGTON**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HONOLULU —The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) is advising restaurants and food retailers not to serve or sell, and to dispose of, and consumers not to eat, oysters and bay clams harvested from growing areas in Netarts Bay and Tillamook Bay. This includes harvesting dates in Oregon on or after May 28, 2024.

In addition, the advisory includes all shellfish species from growing areas in Willapa Bay, WA: Stony Point, harvested from May 26-30, 2024; Bay Center, harvested from May 29-30, 2024; and Bruceport, harvested from May 29-30, 2024, and distributed to Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Nevada, New York, Oregon and Washington, because they may be contaminated with the toxins that cause paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP).

Molluscan shellfish contaminated with natural toxins from the water in which they lived can cause consumer illness. Most of these toxins are produced by naturally occurring marine algae (phytoplankton). Molluscan shellfish consume the algae, which causes the toxins to accumulate in the shellfish's flesh. Typically, contamination occurs following

blooms of the toxic algal species; however, in certain instances toxin contamination is possible even when algal concentrations are low. One of the recognized natural toxin poisoning syndromes that can occur from consuming contaminated molluscan shellfish is PSP.

PSP is caused by neurotoxins, also referred to as saxitoxins or paralytic shellfish toxins (PSTs). Shellfish can retain the toxin for different lengths of time. Some species cleanse themselves of toxins rapidly, whereas others are much slower to remove the toxins. This lengthens the period of time that they pose a human health risk from consumption.

Food containing PSTs may look, smell, and taste normal. These toxins cannot be removed by cooking or freezing. Symptoms of PSP usually begin 30-60 minutes after a person eats toxic shellfish and include numbness and tingling of the face, lips, tongue, arms, and legs. Patients also might have diarrhea and vomiting, headache, and nausea. When large amounts of the toxin are ingested, more severe neurologic symptoms such as unsteady walking, trouble speaking, confusion and muscle weakness may occur. In very severe cases, a person's ability to breathe may be impaired. People experiencing symptoms after eating shellfish should seek medical care right away. Symptoms should be reported to DOH: <https://health.hawaii.gov/docd/about-us/disease-investigation-branch/>

Restaurants and retailers should not serve or sell the potentially contaminated shellfish. Restaurants and retailers should dispose of any products by throwing them in the garbage or contacting their distributor for return and destruction. Persons who have recently purchased shellfish from Oregon or Washington may contact the establishment where they purchased the shellfish to determine whether the shellfish originated from the impacted areas.

Consumers should not eat the potentially contaminated shellfish. Consumers who have symptoms of paralytic shellfish poisoning should contact their health care provider to report their symptoms and receive care.

The DOH Food Safety Branch protects and promotes the health of Hawai'i residents and visitors through education of food industry workers and regulation of food establishments statewide. The branch conducts routine health inspections of food establishments where food products are prepared, manufactured, distributed, or sold.

For more information on the department's placarding program go to <http://health.hawaii.gov/san/>

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