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New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

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## **DEC EXTENDS CLOSURES OF SOUTH SHORE SHELLFISHING AREAS IN NASSAU AND WESTERN SUFFOLK COUNTIES**

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced today that it has extended the closures of particular shellfish harvesting areas in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. These temporary closures are necessary to protect public health due to the adverse water quality effects of the coastal flooding and sewage treatment plant malfunctions caused by Hurricane Sandy. DEC initially implemented the shellfishing closures on Monday, October 29.

Effective at sunrise on **Friday, November 30, 2012**, the following areas are designated as uncertified and the harvest of shellfish is temporarily prohibited through **December 7, 2012**:

**Towns of Hempstead and Oyster Bay (south shore):** All of Hempstead Bay, East Bay and South Oyster Bay and their tributaries.

**Town of Babylon:** All the normally certified shellfish lands in Great South Bay, including tributaries, lying west of a line extending southeasterly from the southernmost tip of Bergen Point (also known as Fleet Point) to the eastern side of Nezeras Island (lying east of Fox Creek Channel) and continuing southeast across the State Boat Channel to Jones Island at the eastern side of Cedar Beach Park.

The action to extend the closure was taken to protect the public health. Water samples that DEC recently collected and examined showed elevated fecal coliform levels in these areas. Fecal coliform bacteria are indicators of the likely presence of fecal material and bacteria and viruses that can cause illness in shellfish consumers. DEC will re-open these areas as soon as possible based on the results of water quality testing samples that it plans to collect and examine next week.

However, all the normally certified waters of Accabonac Harbor in the Town of East Hampton will reopen effective at sunrise on Friday, November 30 based on satisfactory water sampling data collected this week.

DEC has reopened many other bays and harbors around Long Island to shellfishing based on its testing of samples it has collected in those areas during the past three weeks. A recorded message advising harvesters of the status of these shellfish areas may be heard at **(631) 444-0480**. The message will be updated during the course of the temporary closures. If you would like a more detailed description of the closed areas please call the office during normal business hours at **(631) 444-0475**. Additionally, information about temporary closures is available on DEC's website.

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