



News Release

For immediate release: September 30, 2011

(11-148)

Contacts: Julie Graham, Communications Office
Donn Moyer, Communications Office

360-236-4022
360-236-4076

Hood Canal and Samish Bay reopen October 1 for oyster harvest

All areas are open with no restrictions for Vibrio bacteria

OLYMPIA — Cooler fall weather is here and the risk of bacteria *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* in shellfish is lower. For this reason, the Department of Health is re-opening commercial oyster harvest in areas of Hood Canal and Puget Sound, tomorrow October 1.

Vibrio parahaemolyticus bacteria are found naturally in the environment and grow more easily during warm weather. The cooler fall temperatures reduce bacteria growth. All oyster harvest areas will be open with no harvesting restrictions for Vibrio.

This summer, the agency closed oyster harvest in the Hood Canal #4, Hood Canal #5, Hood Canal #9, and Samish Bay growing areas following vibriosis illnesses in people who ate raw oysters from the various areas. The most recent closure in Hood Canal #4 involved the recall of oysters shipped to several states and four foreign countries. These areas are all now re-opened.

Typically, Washington sees about 50 cases of vibriosis a year; this year there have been 41 cases, scattered around the state's shellfish growing areas.

Symptoms of vibriosis include diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, headache, fever, and chills. The symptoms usually appear about 12 hours after eating infected shellfish, but they can begin within two hours or as late as 48 hours after consumption. The illness is usually moderate and lasts for two to seven days; however, it can be more serious, even life threatening to people with weak immune systems or chronic liver disease. Taking certain medications may make vibriosis more likely to occur after eating shellfish.

The [Department of Health website](http://www.doh.wa.gov) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for a *healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

###