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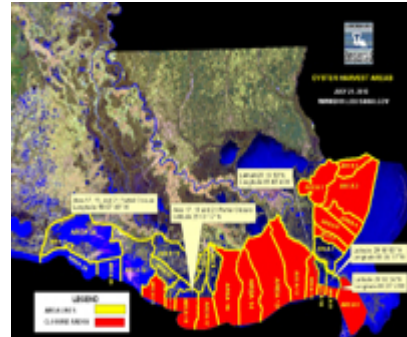
July 21, 2010

DHH Closes Oyster Harvesting Area 23 Due to Oil Spill

Officials Continue Aggressive Testing

BATON ROUGE - The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals announced today the closure of oyster harvesting Area 23 in response to the BP oil spill in the Gulf.

The closure of Area 23 is west of the Mississippi River in Terrebonne Parish.



[Click on the map to view full size](#)

New reports of oil, strong easterly winds and higher than normal tides were cause for these precautionary closures. They are being implemented based on information from field staff, trajectories from NOAA and accompanying closures from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

DHH Secretary Alan Levine and State Health Officer Dr. Jimmy Guidry signed the closure order, which will take effect at sunset today, Wednesday, July 21, 2010.

DHH officials have been working closely with local, state and federal agencies to monitor the oil plume off of the Louisiana coastline for its potential impacts on oyster harvesting areas.

In addition to regular testing schedules, DHH sanitarians are conducting enhanced testing of oyster meat taken from the beds to monitor for the presence of oil. Oysters being harvested in areas open for harvesting have been deemed

safe by DHH.

In addition to the closures announced today, areas 1 through 6, 8, and 11 through 15 remain closed. Areas 9, 10, 17, 19 and 21 remain partially closed. All other areas are open.

The public is encouraged to call a toll-free hotline, 1-800-256-2775, to report the presence of oil or an oil sheen.

For more information related to the oil spill, visit <http://www.emergency.louisiana.gov>. Connect with us on www.facebook.com/GOHSEP and on Twitter as @GOHSEP. View photos from the state's response efforts at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/lagohsep>.

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