

The Delaware Dept of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) has initiated direct communications with Delaware Shellfish Harvesters and Certified Dealers regarding preparations for Hurricane Irene. Due to resource restrictions there is currently no oyster harvest on the Delaware side of Delaware Bay. The only shellfish harvests at this time are clams from the Indian River or Rehoboth Bay. Based on the discussions with the DNREC Shellfish Program Harvesting of clams will not be occurring beginning on Saturday and DNREC will monitor the storm and its impact on the rivers where shellfish would be harvested. The Program will evaluate the impact of the rainfall, flooding, tides, power failures and other factors to determine if harvest is safe. It was indicated that this action would include sampling of waters to assist in determining the safety of harvesting beginning on Monday if weather conditions permit. In addition Debbie Rouse DNREC Shellfish & Recreational Bathing Waters Program Manager has and continues to be in communications with the Wastewater Treatment plant (WWTP) operators to determine if the plants infrastructure had failed during the storm including pumps and lift stations or if by-passes had occurred.

Further the DNREC Shellfish Program will be visiting or otherwise contacting all of its Certified Shellfish Dealers to determine the storms impact including flooding and if any products held on-site are stored under refrigeration and have not been subject to flooding or other contamination.