MUSSEL QUARANTINE ORDER

Effective May 1 through October 31, 2008

A quarantine is hereby established on all species of mussels taken by recreational sport harvesters from the ocean shore of California. The quarantine area extends from the Oregon border south to the Mexican border, including all bays, inlets, and harbors.

This quarantine is established to protect and preserve the public health under the authority of Section 131056 of the California Health and Safety Code. During the quarantine season, mussels may concentrate naturally occurring toxins that are highly poisonous to humans.

DO NOT EAT MUSSELS HARVESTED IN VIOLATION OF THIS QUARANTINE

State law prohibits the sale or offering for sale for human consumption of any bivalve (two-shelled) shellfish, except by a State-certified commercial shellfish harvester or dealer. Shellfish sold by certified harvesters or dealers are subject to frequent mandatory testing and are not subject to this quarantine.

Mussels may be sold for use as bait when displayed and sold in containers labeled in boldfaced type letters at least one-half inch in height as follows:

MUSSELS FOR BAIT ONLY
UNFIT FOR HUMAN FOOD

Persons taking clams or scallops are warned to remove and discard the digestive organs or viscera and any other dark parts. Only the white meat of clams and scallops should be prepared for human consumption. In addition, bivalve shellfish should not be taken for food from any area subject to sewage or chemical contamination.

All health officers and their authorized representatives are hereby instructed to enforce the provisions of this quarantine order, which shall be effective from May 1 through October 31, 2008. The health officers of the coastal and bay counties are instructed to post copies of this order or other suitable placards in conspicuous places advising the public of this quarantine.

Mark B Horton, MD, MSPH
Director
California Department of Public Health