

**Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program -
Manual of Operations**

APPENDIX VIII

PROTOCOL FOR EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF ANY SHELLFISH AREA

CSSP control agencies must be able to react quickly to an emergency situation in order to place an affected shellfish area in the closed status. An emergency situation may include, but is not limited to, events such as unusual weather, flooding, and spills of oil, toxic chemicals or sewage. Emergency closures do not include those resulting from elevated biotoxin levels, nor conditionally-managed areas based on the operation of wastewater treatment and collection systems.

1. In all cases, the CSSP control agencies will advise, as soon as possible, all members of the appropriate RISC of their action in response to an emergency situation. Shellfish harvesters and processors will be advised of closures through established communication procedures.
2. Subject to item 3, Upon notification of an emergency event or determination that changes in environmental conditions pose a risk of contamination to harvestable shellfish, EC and/or the CFIA will provide a recommendation to DFO to place the affected shellfish area in the closed status and provide the closure boundaries for that area.
3. Where pre-determined impact areas and/or standing recommendations for closure boundaries have been provided by EC and/or the CFIA, and DFO has been notified of an emergency event within the impact area, DFO will place the affected shellfish growing areas in the closed status.
4. Upon further evaluation EC and/or CFIA will provide a recommendation to DFO if there is a need to rescind or modify the size of the closure. DFO will modify or rescind the closure accordingly.
5. The closure of the affected area will remain in place for at least 7 days. At this time, EC and/or CFIA will evaluate the situation and advise DFO if changes in the closure status are warranted. This may be achieved through sampling of water and shellstock and/or other factors relevant to the conditions in the area that led to the closure recommendation.

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6. Once satisfied that the bacteriological and/or chemical quality of the water (by EC) and shellstock (by the CFIA) no longer pose a risk of contamination of shellfish, each agency will recommend to DFO that the area may return to the open status.

7. If the emergency closure is in response to a discharge of untreated or partially treated sewage, the affected area may be re-opened upon recommendation either:
 - a. after a minimum of 7 days sampling of water and shellstock from representative locations within the closed area, or
 - b. without sampling following a 21-day period after cessation of the last discharge event.