



Office of the Governor

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THE PEOPLE'S GOVERNOR**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Governor Schwarzenegger Reopens Crab Season, Fishing in San Francisco Bay after Oil Spill**

Governor Schwarzenegger today announced that fishing in the San Francisco Bay can resume immediately, since test results show no significant health risk from eating marine life caught in the area impacted by the oil spill. The exceptions are commercial oyster facilities and mussels caught in two locations: Berkeley Marina and Rodeo Beach in Marin County.

"Following the diligent work done by the Department of Fish and Game, the Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment and Department of Public Health to respond to the spill, I'm pleased to report that fishing in the San Francisco Bay will resume today," Schwarzenegger said. "The test results our scientists have analyzed demonstrate that there is a clean bill of health for the fish, and that they are safe to eat."

On Nov. 13, the Governor issued an Executive Order closing fishing in the Bay so that tests on the fish could be conducted following the Cosco Busan oil spill. Samples collected by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and analyzed by the Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), show that marine life in the Bay and coastal waters are fit for human consumption.

Now that test results have come back negative, the recreational and commercial fishery closure has been lifted.

Specifically, the Dungeness crab season will immediately resume and the season for herring will open as previously scheduled. All pre-spill seasons, limits and other legal requirements are now in place. The prohibition in the Bay on the use of live wells or holding tanks that draw in water from the outside that are used to transport crab and other species is lifted. Commercial bait operations that use holding pens or nets in the Bay may also resume.

While fish and shellfish from the spill area, with the exception of mussels in the two locations, are safe to eat, it is still possible for marine life to come into contact with pockets of oil over the next several months. OEHHA and CDPH recommend that sport fishers take a common sense approach and avoid consuming fish and shellfish with an oily smell or taste. Officials also recommend that commercial fishers and crabbers take appropriate steps to ensure their catches do not contact any remaining floating oil and are free of signs of contamination.

Consumers should continue to follow pre-spill safety guidelines for mercury and other contaminant exposures from San Francisco Bay sport fish that are posted on OEHHA's Web site at [www.oehha.ca.gov](http://www.oehha.ca.gov). Health officials will continue testing fish in the spill area to ensure ongoing health and safety for human consumption.

Following the Governor's Executive Order, chemical analysis began on species that included Dungeness and Rock crab, herring, shiner, black surfperch and mussels. Analysis of the fish and crabs showed they are as safe for human consumption as they were before the Nov. 7 oil spill. Unlike crabs and finfish, mussels cannot move to avoid oil slicks and their metabolism is too slow to efficiently process and eliminate chemical contaminants. OEHHA is recommending that consumers avoid eating mussels from Berkeley Pier and Rodeo Beach until additional testing indicates they no longer pose a health concern. Commercial oyster facilities also will remain closed. Oysters will continue to be monitored for possible contamination.

DFG collected the crab and fish samples and defined the oil spill zone as the entire San Francisco Bay west of the Carquinez Bridge plus a three-mile-wide section of the Pacific Coast between the Point Reyes Lighthouse in Marin County and San Pedro Point in San Mateo County. A map of the spill area is posted on the Internet at

[www.dfg.ca.gov/news/fisheries-closure.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/news/fisheries-closure.pdf)

Samples were collected from locations directly affected by the oil spill, including Angel Island, the Berkeley Pier, Ocean Beach in San Francisco and the Marin and San Mateo County coasts. Additional samples were collected for comparison purposes from areas beyond the spill zone, including Bodega and Tomales Bays.

Fish and crab samples were tested for the presence of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)—the most toxic components of the 58,000 gallons of bunker fuel spilled into the Bay by the Cosco Busan container ship. Most samples had no detectable levels of PAHs of health concern. The samples did not have concentrations of PAHs that pose significant health risk except for mussels in the two locations.

On Nov. 7, the Cosco Busan, a 900-foot container ship bound from Oakland to South Korea, struck a Bay Bridge abutment west of Yerba Buena Island, ripping a 100-foot gash in its portside hull and spilling fuel into the bay.