

# SHELLFISH HARVESTER REGULATIONS FACT SHEET

## HARVESTING AND HANDLING

### HARVEST IN APPROVED AREAS

The **Virginia Department of Health Division of Shellfish Safety (VDH/DSS)** classifies and monitors shellfish harvest areas based on levels of pollution.

**Approved areas** are growing areas where harvest for direct marketing is allowed.

**Condemned areas** are areas where harvesting is either not allowed or allowed with certain restrictions.

### CHECK CONDEMNATIONS

There are several options to check the status of harvesting areas:



Download VMRC MAPS from your smartphone app store. The free app from the **Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)** shows the user position relative to leases and condemnations.

[VDH/DSS online map](#) allows users to check the shellfish closure status for a specific lease location and shows the local seawater sampling station data.

[VMRC Chesapeake Bay Map](#) which will allow users to check the shellfish closure status to a specific lease

### TAG SHELLFISH

Harvested shellfish must be tagged with required information.

Shellstock tags provide the the **4W's: WHO** harvested the product, **WHEN** and **WHERE** it was harvested, and **WHAT** type of shellfish was harvested.

The information on this tag follows the shellfish from harvest to the final consumer.

### SELL ONLY TO A CERTIFIED DEALER

**All harvest must be sold to a certified shellfish dealer.**

No direct sales of shellfish are allowable for harvesters without a certification from VDH/DSS. The Interstate Certified Shellfish Shippers List shows [certified shellfish dealers](#).

### HARVESTING BY BOAT

The boat must be registered with the state; Be properly constructed; Have an available sanitation device; Provide shading to protect shellfish; and Have USCG approved equipment.

**Don't discharge human waste overboard.** Not only is it prohibited, it can lead to contamination of the shellfish in the harvest area resulting in closures.

**Use proper culling techniques** to assure shellfish are available to future harvesters.

## WARM WATER HARVEST CURFEWS (OYSTERS ONLY)

MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT
11:00 AM	10:00 AM			12:00 NOON	
NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
NO CURFEW - HARVEST IS SUNRISE TO SUNSET					

### FOLLOW HARVEST AND SEASONAL TIME TABLES

Shellfish must be harvested, offloaded, and landed by the curfew times listed above in order to limit the growth of Vibrio bacteria. Pay attention to the [warm water harvest regulations](#) in effect May 1 – Oct 31. Harvest during these months will require shading and VDH-approved temperature control for land-based deliveries.

No harvest is allowed before sunrise from June 1 through August 31.

**Harvest times can be extended** from May through October as long as the harvester is using an approved method of harvest such as the use of ice or a GPS tracking device and a permit has been granted.

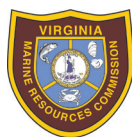
## TRANSPORTATION

### DELIVER DIRECTLY TO CERTIFIED DEALER

Deliver shellfish to a certified dealer facility using mechanical refrigeration (at 45°F or less) or ice when transport times exceed 1 hour and provide shade to ensure the product is protected.

**Do not expose shellfish** to gasoline, garbage, animals, etc.

## CONTACTS



### VMRC SHELLFISH MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
(757) 247-2200

FOR HARVESTER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO:  
Boater safety regulations; Catch limits; Seasons, Gear types, Vessel sanitation



VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH

### DIVISION OF SHELLFISH SAFETY & WATERBORNE HAZARDS

**Central Office:** (804) 864-7480  
**Accomac Field Office:** (757) 787-5864  
**Norfolk Field Office:** (757) 683-8461  
**Kilmarnock Field Office:** (804) 577-4007

FOR HARVESTER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO: Water classification/monitoring; Plant processing, Sanitation & inspection; Dealer certification; Vessel certification

