

Shellfish Safety Notification: Sport-Harvested Bivalve Shellfish from Sonoma County

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Number: SN19-007

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Dangerous levels of paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) toxins have been detected in mussels from Sonoma County. The naturally occurring PSP toxins can cause illness or death in humans. Cooking does not destroy the toxin.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is advising consumers not to eat sport-harvested mussels, clams, or whole scallops from Sonoma County.

This shellfish safety notification is in addition to the [annual mussel quarantine starting May 1, 2019](#). The annual quarantine applies to all species of mussels harvested along the California coast, as well as all bays and estuaries, and will continue through at least October 31.

This warning does not apply to commercially sold clams, mussels, scallops or oysters from approved sources. State law permits only state-certified commercial shellfish harvesters or dealers to sell these products. Shellfish sold by certified harvesters and dealers are subject to frequent mandatory testing to monitor for toxins.

PSP toxins affect the central nervous system, producing a tingling around the mouth and fingertips within a few minutes to a few hours after eating toxic shellfish. These symptoms are typically followed by loss of balance, lack of muscular coordination, slurred speech and difficulty swallowing. In severe poisonings, complete muscular paralysis and death from asphyxiation can occur.

You can get the most current information on shellfish advisories and quarantines by calling CDPH's toll-free Shellfish Information Line at (800) 553-4133. For additional information, please visit the [CDPH Marine Biotxin Monitoring Web page](#).