



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 12, 2009

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What is the State of Your Oyster?

Washington Sea Grant (WSG) continues its State of the Oyster Study this spring and summer, inviting volunteers to monitor bacterial contamination on privately owned beaches on Hood Canal and Puget Sound.

At low tide on four days, waterfront property owners can collect oysters or clams from their beaches. WSG will arrange for laboratory testing of the samples, which will be analyzed for the presence of harmful bacterial and bacterial indicators of fecal contamination. WSG will then help participants interpret their test results and, if needed, work closely with them to identify and remedy the sources of contamination.

To participate, waterfront property owners need to fill out and mail in the form that's available on the WSG Web site at

<http://www.wsg.washington.edu/mas/resources/shellfish.html>.

This season's sampling dates are:

- **Monday, May 25**; low tide (-4.0) at 12:15 p.m.
- **Sunday, June 21**; low tide (-3.4) at 10:24 a.m.
- **Sunday, July 19**; low tide (-2.5) at 9:15 a.m.
- **Sunday, Aug. 16**; low tide (-1.3) at 7:55 a.m.

On those dates, participants should collect six large oysters, with shell lengths of at least five inches, or 24 clams. The shellfish should remain in the shell and be placed in heavy, leak-proof bags marked with name, collection site address, mailing address and phone number or e-mail. Samples should be kept on ice until delivered to a drop-off site.

The following drop-off sites will be open noon-2:30 p.m. only on the dates listed above:

- Hunter Farms, 1921 E. State Route 106, Union.
- Booth in driveway at 6751 E. State Route 106, Union.
- Happy Hollow Store, 15280 E. State Route 106, Belfair.
- QFC parking lot, 1403 Old Belfair Highway, Belfair.

Since 1987, the State of the Oyster Study has helped waterfront residents on more than 300 Washington beaches learn what makes for safer oysters and clams and how to minimize fecal contamination in their waters.

Based at the University of Washington, Washington Sea Grant supports marine research and education and works with stakeholders to manage and protect marine resources.