

Tests clear razor clam digs at 4 of 5 ocean beaches

Local News

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OLYMPIA - Twin Harbors beach will open for razor clam digging today, followed by openings at three other beaches this weekend after a new round of marine toxin tests showed the clams there are safe to eat.

Long Beach, however, will remain closed to digging due to high levels of paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) detected in the clams.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) delayed making a final decision on digs at Twin Harbors, Copalis and Mocrocks after high PSP levels were found at Long Beach.

The Olympic National Park also approved a dig scheduled at Kalaloch Beach, based on the results of a new round of marine toxin tests.

"We're pleased that we can move forward with digs at these four beaches," said Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager. "The latest tests showed that the clams there remain safe to eat." The four beaches will open for digging at noon on the following days:

Twin Harbors - Thursday (Jan. 28) through Sunday (Jan. 31)

Copalis and Mocrocks - Friday (Jan. 29) through Sunday (Jan. 31)

Kalaloch Beach - Saturday (Jan. 30) through Sunday (Jan. 31)

Ayres said toxin levels in clams dug last week at Long Beach violate health standards established by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, ruling out an opening at that beach. PSP is a marine toxin produced by a certain type of algae (Alexandrium dinoflaellates) that can cause paralysis and even death if consumed in sufficient quantities.

At the other beaches, harvesters may take no more than 15 razor clams and must keep the first 15 taken, regardless of size or condition. Each digger's limit must be kept in a separate container. All diggers must have an applicable 2009-10 fishing license to dig razor clams on any beach. A license is required for anyone age 15 or older.

Anglers can buy a combination license or an annual shellfish/seaweed license. Also available are razor-clam only licenses in annual or three-day only versions. Descriptions of the various licensing options are available on the WDFW website at <https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov>. A list of state license vendors is available at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/lic/vendors/vendors.htm>.

Beaches scheduled to open for razor-clam digging this week are:

Twin Harbors Beach, which extends from the mouth of Willapa Bay north to the south jetty at the mouth of Grays Harbor.

Copalis Beach, which extends from the Grays Harbor north jetty to the Copalis River, and includes the Copalis, Ocean Shores, Oyhut, Ocean City and Copalis areas.

Mocrocks Beach, which extends from the Copalis River to the southern boundary of the Quinault Reservation near the Moclips River, including Iron Springs, Roosevelt Beach, Pacific Beach and Moclips.

Kalaloch Beach, which extends from the South Beach Campground to Brown's Point (just

south of Beach Trail 3) in the Olympic National Park.