

# What you should know about Eating seafood from Port Angeles Harbor



Past industrial activities around Port Angeles Harbor in Clallam County, Washington released chemicals into the harbor. These chemicals accumulate in seafood. You may ingest these chemicals when you eat seafood from the harbor. There are actions you can take to reduce your exposure to chemical contaminants in seafood.

## Recommendations for eating seafood from Port Angeles Harbor

Seafood is a nutritious source of protein and is low in calories and saturated fats. The Washington State Department of Health encourages all Washingtonians to eat at least two servings of seafood per week as part of a heart healthy diet. It is best to eat a variety of seafood from different sources.

### If you eat seafood from Port Angeles Harbor, follow these guidelines:

- **Do not eat more than four (4) servings of crab meat per month** from Port Angeles Harbor. A serving for an adult is eight (8) ounces (or 227 grams) of uncooked meat.
- **Do not eat any crab hepatopancreas (crab butter)** harvested from Port Angeles Harbor.
- **Do not eat or harvest shellfish** (all varieties of oysters, clams, mussels and scallops) from Port Angeles Harbor. This area is permanently closed to shellfish harvesting by Department of Health due to sanitary conditions. Learn about closures at [www.doh.wa.gov/shellfishsafety](http://www.doh.wa.gov/shellfishsafety).



Look for signs near the harbor and visit [www.doh.wa.gov/fish](http://www.doh.wa.gov/fish) to learn how to protect your health.

## Health concerns

Washington State Department of Health evaluated how eating seafood from Port Angeles Harbor may impact your health. We looked at chemical contaminants in Dungeness crab, coonstripe shrimp and mussels.

- Eating Dungeness crab meat or butter from Port Angeles Harbor could:
  - Increase the risk of cancer over your lifetime.
  - Result in other health impacts, like decreased immune function.
- Eating mussels is not expected to harm your health. However, Port Angeles Harbor is permanently closed to shellfish harvesting due to other water quality concerns.
- Eating coonstripe shrimp is not expected to harm your health.

## What can you do to learn more?

- Visit [www.doh.wa.gov/fish](http://www.doh.wa.gov/fish) to learn how to reduce your exposure to contaminants in seafood.
- Check [www.doh.wa.gov/shellfishsafety](http://www.doh.wa.gov/shellfishsafety) to learn about beach closures before harvesting shellfish.

## About health consultations

The Washington State Department of Health completes health consultations under a cooperative agreement with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

Health consultations are completed when community members or agencies have concerns about chemicals in their environment. Department of Health looks at environmental and health data to determine whether contact with chemicals in the environment is harmful to your health. We make suggestions about how to protect your health based on this information.

## What did we do?

Washington State Department of Health worked with Clallam County Environmental Health to complete this health consultation. We looked at data from 2002 to 2012 about chemical contaminants in Dungeness crab, coonstripe shrimp and mussels in Port Angeles Harbor.

We wanted to learn about:

- Chemicals in Dungeness crab, coonstripe shrimp and mussels.
- How much seafood people living in Washington eat.
- How much seafood Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe members eat.
- Recommended meal limits for crab from Port Angeles Harbor.



### Seafood consumption rates (in grams per day)

	State resident	Tribal
Seafood	175.0	583.0
Crab	52.5	149.4
Shrimp	17.5	49.8
Mussels	17.5	49.8

## What did we learn?

We found some harmful health hazards. Based on this information, we recommend people avoid harvesting shellfish from Port Angeles Harbor and follow fish advisories at [www.doh.wa.gov/fish](http://www.doh.wa.gov/fish) for the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Marine Area 6.

## What will happen next?

Washington State Department of Health will:

- Work with Clallam County to distribute information for people that visit and live near Port Angeles Harbor.
- Help Clallam County to develop additional educational materials as needed.
- Meet with partners to discuss opportunities for future sampling and review plans to make sure samples can be used for future health assessments.

A full copy of the health consultation report is available at [www.doh.wa.gov/consults](http://www.doh.wa.gov/consults).  
For more information, contact Washington State Department of Health at 1-877-485-7316.