

NEWS RELEASE

MS Dept. of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi 39530



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ENHANCE ★ PROTECT ★ CONSERVE

MDMR closes oyster reefs and MDEQ closes beach due to algae bloom

BILOXI, Miss. – Officials with the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources closed all oyster reefs Friday at 4 p.m.

The decision was made as a precautionary measure due to the proximity of potentially harmful algae blooms in the Mississippi Sound.

"We're erring on the side of public safety," MDMR Executive Director Jamie Miller said. "Algae blooms are unusual in this area and at this time of year, but we want to make sure residents are safe."

The following oyster reefs will close:

Area I "B" Conditionally Approved Waters - This area includes St. Joseph's or St. Joe Reef.

Area II "A" Conditionally Approved Waters – This area includes northern portions of the Pass Christian and Henderson Point reefs and Hornets reef.

Area II "B" Conditionally Approved Waters – This area includes St. Stanislaus and Waveland reefs.

Area II "D" Conditionally Approved Waters – This area includes the public reefs in St. Louis Bay, between the U.S. Highway 90 Bridge and the CSX Railroad Bridge.

Area II "E" Conditionally Approved Waters - This area includes Square Handkerchief reef and southern portions of Henderson Point Reef.

Area II "F" Conditionally Approved Waters - This area includes southern portions of the Pass Christian Reef.

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These areas will remain closed until further notice. All other current rules and regulations will remain in effect.

MDMR scientists will continue to sample the water, and oyster reefs will reopen as soon as the samples indicate appropriate harvest conditions.

In addition, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), through its Beach Monitoring Program, is issuing a preemptive closure for all beach segments along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. This precautionary measure is being taken because of the possibility of respiratory problems and irritations to the eyes, nose, skin and throat.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at dmr.ms.gov.

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