
Washington State Department of Health
2012 Early Warning System Summary for
Shellfish Growing Areas in Whatcom County



The Department of Health (DOH) places shellfish growing areas in a “Threatened” or “Concerned” status based on our assessment of threats to the growing area’s classification. This assessment is currently based on the identification of pollution sources that may impact public health, and/or how close a water sampling station’s bacteria levels are to the National Shellfish Sanitation Program’s (NSSP) standards. The latter has been the most common and is described below.

The NSSP prescribes two methods to evaluate fecal coliform levels at water sampling stations to classify growing areas: Systematic Random Sampling (SRS) and Adverse Pollution Conditions (APC). Both use a minimum of the last 30 samples. With the SRS method, the 90th percentile cannot exceed 43 fc/100mL. With the APC method, no more than 10% of the samples can exceed 43 fc/100mL. If any of these standards are exceeded, no shellfish can be directly harvested from the area of that station.

A Threatened status is assigned in SRS growing areas when a water sampling station’s 90th percentile is between 30 and 43 fc/100mL. In APC growing areas, a Threatened status is assigned if more than 6.0% of the samples have exceeded 43 fc/100mL.

A Concerned status is assigned where a water sampling station’s 90th percentile is greater than 20, but less than 30. The DOH is providing this information to county governments so that corrective actions can take place before water quality at the listed stations fails the shellfish standards.

PORTAGE BAY GROWING AREA

Station Number 50	Threatened due to water quality
Station Number 272	Threatened due to water quality
Station Number 49	Concerns due to water quality
Station Number 51	Concerns due to water quality
Station Number 57	Concerns due to water quality
Station Number 271	Concerns due to water quality