



# News Release

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT  
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**For release:** July 6, 2012

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## **DEM ANNOUNCES SHELLFISH CLOSURE IN BRISTOL HARBOR BEGINNING AT NOON TODAY DUE TO REPORTED SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT DISINFECTION FAILURE**

PROVIDENCE – The Department of Environmental Management has announced that in addition to currently Prohibited and Seasonally Closed waters within Bristol Harbor and surrounding Hog Island, **the remaining waters of Bristol Harbor and in the vicinity of Hog Island (see attached map) will be closed to shellfish harvesting beginning at noon Friday, July 6, until further notice.** DEM is collecting water samples of the Harbor to test for fecal coliform bacteria levels today. The DEM will then make a determination on the duration of the closure upon review of those sample results.

The closure is being enacted because of information provided to the DEM by the Town of Bristol that an electrical system failure caused a loss of disinfection of the effluent from the Bristol Wastewater Treatment Facility during the night and morning hours of July 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. As required, Town officials notified DEM this morning of the failure by the treatment facility. Based on information provided by the Town, DEM estimates that 1.4 million gallons of effluent did not receive disinfection and was discharged to Walker Cove. The Bristol wastewater treatment facility is operated by the Bristol Water Pollution Control Department.

**Closure Information:** Specifically, all waters North and East of a line from the southern tip of Poppasquash Point, Bristol to Southwest Point on Hog Island and from the southwest point of Hog Island to the southwestern extremity of Arnold Point in Portsmouth, where a DEM range marker has been established will be closed to shellfish harvesting beginning at noon Friday, July 6, until further notice. Refer to the attached map as reference.

In addition, to accommodate previously scheduled delivery of oyster seed, all aquaculturists in areas where the emergency shellfish closures have been enacted will be allowed access to their leases for the purposes of preparing for and planting the oyster seed. All other activities on the

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aquaculture lease including but not limited to the harvest of shellfish will remain prohibited until the water quality is acceptable to allow for harvest. Aquaculturists seeking permission to prepare for or plant seed under this emergency authorization are required to contact Dave Beutel, CRMC's Aquaculture Coordinator at 783-7587.

A DEM investigation of the failure is underway. The facility is currently operating normally with full power restored.

For more information on the plant failure, contact Bristol Wastewater Treatment Facility superintendent Jose DaSilva at 401-253-8877

For more information about the shellfish closure, contact Cindy Hannus in DEM's Office of Water Resources at 222-4700 extension 7241.

**#end#**

**Disinfection Failure Bristol WWTF  
July 6, 2012  
Emergency Closure**

-  Emergency Closure Area
-  Shellfishing Prohibited

