



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

## Department of Environmental Conservation

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
Environmental Health Laboratory

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November 14, 2024

### **RE: Changes in testing for Paralytic Shellfish Toxins**

To our valued clients:

As previously mentioned in 10/24/24 memo, the laboratory mouse supplier that the Environmental Health Lab (EHL) has used for over 30 years went out of business last week. This caused a temporary change to paralytic shellfish toxin (PST) testing at EHL. However, EHL has been able to secure a new vendor on the west coast.

Starting Monday, November 18, the EHL will again use the mouse bioassay (MBA) to test for PST in commercial shellfish. Additionally, the MBA is again available to be used for non-commercial samples as well.

In short, EHL is back to business as usual for PST testing.

I also want to update you on some PST related projects in the works. The Southeast Conference via the Build Back Better Regional Grant has allowed EHL to procure two new instrument systems. The projects attempt to validate both methods this equipment performs to cover all Alaskan commercial shellfish and stop testing on live mice.

EHL is very excited about these opportunities to stop live animal testing, but also to increase testing capacity to match the goals of mariculture growth. These projects, and the work to get regulatory approval for these methods, is likely a year or more out. EHL provides updates on progress at meetings such as Alaska Shellfish Growers Association (collocated with the Mariculture Conference of Alaska), Southeast Conference governance meetings, and Alaska Harmful Algal Bloom Network.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this unprecedented time and future developments. As always, assistance is available with timing of sample collections, completion of submission forms, packaging, temperature requirements, shipping, and sample tracking. Sampling questions, planned sampling activities, and shipping notifications, can be made to [DEC.EH-Lab-ShippingReceiving@alaska.gov](mailto:DEC.EH-Lab-ShippingReceiving@alaska.gov) or 907-375-8231.

Regards,

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