



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES
MARINE RESOURCES LABORATORY
P.O. BOX 8, 194 MCKOWN POINT RD
W. BOOTHBAY HARBOR, MAINE
04575-0008

PATRICK C. KELIHER
COMMISSIONER

Dear Town LPI/CEO;

March 6th, 2018

The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR), Bureau of Public Health is responsible for managing shellfish harvest areas along the Maine coast. As the Shellfish Control Authority for the State of Maine, DMR participates in the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference, along with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and is required to follow guidelines that ensure that shellfish are safe for human consumption.

Shellfish growing areas are classified based on a number of factors, including the presence or absence of real or potential sewage pollution. The assessment of sewage pollution impacts are determined by shoreline surveys conducted by trained DMR staff often in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The shoreline survey involves walking the coastline and making observations and assessments of the potential and actual pollution sources that may impact shellfish harvest areas. For homeowners, this means DMR staff will conduct a brief interview regarding the condition of their septic system and information about disposal of domestic animal waste and farm operations. The DMR collects and compiles these data to properly classify the shellfish areas, to re-open closed areas after remediation of a pollution source and to maintain areas open for shellfish harvest.

If pollution problems are identified, the town is notified by DMR staff with a Problem Form. This form states the location and description of the pollution source in question. The DMR asks the town LPI/CEO to inspect the property and fill out the form with their investigative results. Upon completion, the LPI/CEO sends the form to the State Plumbing Inspector, Brent Lawson. If a septic problem cannot be fixed due to financial hardship, the resident or town can contact the DEP which runs the Small Community Grant program to assist with upgrades to septic systems that impact surface water or the Overboard Discharge (OBD) Elimination Grant Program to assist homeowners with the removal of licensed OBDs.

The Maine DMR will be conducting a shoreline survey in your town for the 2018 season. Shoreline survey work will begin in mid-March and continue until November. DMR staff, with assistance from DEP officials will be walking the shoreline and making observations about potential pollution sources to coastal waters and shellfish areas. The survey is intended to assist towns in remediation efforts in order to either open or keep open local shellfish harvest areas. Thank you for your cooperation!

If you have questions about DMR's shellfish classification program or the shoreline survey process please do not hesitate to contact the DMR Shellfish Growing Area Program in Boothbay 207.633.9500. For more information about DEPs grant programs, Tim MacMillan of the DEP at 207.287.7765, or tim.a.macmillan@maine.gov or visit the DEP's website at: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/assistance/grants-loans/index.html>

Sincerely,

Kohl Kanwit, Director, Bureau of Public Health