

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**For More Information Contact**

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## **VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CLOSES AREA TO SHELLFISH HARVESTING**

(RICHMOND, Va.)— The Virginia Department of Health announced today that shellfish-harvesting waters near Allens Island in the York River in Gloucester County are closed to the harvest of oysters and clams effective January 24, 2020. This closure is the result of notification of a Norovirus Outbreak in Central Virginia with an epidemiological link to shellfish harvested from this area. This closure is for 21 days.

Maps of the affected areas are located on the Division of Shellfish Sanitation's home page at [www.vdh.virginia.gov/Shellfish/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/Shellfish/). The affected shellfish are bivalve mollusks including oysters and clams, but not crabs or fin fish.

For more information on shellfish closures, see the frequently asked questions on shellfish condemnations at [www.vdh.virginia.gov/EnvironmentalHealth/Shellfish/faq/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/EnvironmentalHealth/Shellfish/faq/).

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## **Notice of Recall –Virginia –issued 1/24/2020**

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Division of Shellfish Safety is conducting a recall of shellstock oysters from Colonial Oyster Company (VA1602SS) in Hayes, Virginia, due to reports of oyster-associated norovirus illness. This recall includes oysters harvested from lease number 21231 in the York River in Virginia for the harvest period of January 8, 2020 to January 24, 2020. Colonial Oyster Company (VA1602SS) is the only shellfish dealer currently identified in this recall and is in the process of contacting their customers.

VDH received reports of gastrointestinal illness from persons after consuming oysters (January 12 and 17, 2020) at two separate facilities located within Virginia, which served the implicated oysters.

At this time, preliminary information obtained from the shellfish dealer indicates distribution in Virginia and Washington, D.C. only. VDH will contact state shellfish authorities with additional details of distribution as it becomes available.

Symptoms of norovirus usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. Sometimes people have a low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and a general sense of tiredness. Dehydration is the most common complication of illness. Symptoms of norovirus infection usually begin 10–50 hours after exposure. The illness is usually brief, with symptoms lasting 1–3 days. If you suspect that you may have become ill from consuming raw oysters, please contact your [local health department](#). You can also log onto [My Meal Detective](#) to file an online foodborne illness report.

For more information or questions related to this recall, contact the Virginia Department of Health, Division of Shellfish Safety at (804) 864-7480.