

Cal. Water Code § 13177.5 -

(a) The state board, in consultation with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, shall develop a comprehensive coastal monitoring and assessment program for sport fish and shellfish, to be known as the Coastal Fish Contamination Program. The program shall identify and monitor chemical contamination in coastal fish and shellfish and assess the health risks of consumption of sport fish and shellfish caught by consumers.

(b) The state board shall consult with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and regional water quality control boards with jurisdiction over territory along the coast, to determine chemicals, sampling locations, and the species to be collected under the program. The program developed by the state board shall include all of the following:

(1) Screening studies to identify coastal fishing areas where fish species have the potential for accumulating chemicals that pose significant health risks to human consumers of sport fish and shellfish.

(2) The assessment of at least 60 screening study monitoring sites and 120 samples in the first five years of the program and an assessment of additional screening study sites as time and resources permit.

(3) Comprehensive monitoring and assessment of fishing areas determined through screening studies to have a potential for significant human health risk and a reassessment of these areas every five years.

(c) Based on existing fish contamination data, the state board shall designate a minimum of 40 sites as fixed sampling locations for the ongoing monitoring effort.

(d) The state board shall contract with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment to prepare comprehensive health risk assessments for sport fish and shellfish monitored in the program. The assessments shall be based on the data collected by the program and information on fish consumption and food preparation. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, within 18 months of the completion of a comprehensive study for each area by the state board, shall submit to the board a draft health risk assessment report for that area. Those health risk assessments shall be updated following the reassessment of areas by the board.

(e) The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment shall issue health advisories when the office determines that consuming certain fish or shellfish presents a significant health risk. The advisories shall contain information for the public, and particularly the population at risk, concerning health risks from the consumption of the fish or shellfish. The office shall notify the appropriate county health officers, the State Department of Public Health, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife before the issuance of a health advisory. The notification shall provide sufficient information for the purpose of posting signage. The office shall urge county health officers to conspicuously post health warnings in areas where contaminated fish or shellfish may be caught including piers, commercial passenger fishing vessels, and shore areas where fishing occurs. The Department of Fish and Wildlife shall publish the office's health warnings in its Sport Fishing Regulations Booklet.

(Added by Stats.2000, c. 144 (A.B.2872), § 12, eff. July 19, 2000. Amended by Stats.2015, c. 673 (A.B.1531), § 22, eff. Jan. 1, 2016.)