

Milford Recreational Shellfishing

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AQUACULTURE
AND LABORATORY



The Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture and Laboratory administers the following programs:

SHELLFISH SANITATION: This program is required to assure safe shellfishing areas for commercial and recreational harvesting, protection of public health, and to maintain certification and compliance with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

The Bureau performs coastal sanitary surveys along Connecticut's 250 mile shoreline and monitors shellfish growing areas in Long Island Sound for pollutants. Seawater and shellfish meat samples are collected and tested by the Bureau for fecal coliform and naturally occurring marine biotoxins. The Bureau, in response to sanitary survey results, posts areas closed to shellfishing, performs hydrographic dye dilution studies, performs environmental investigations, prepares memo-randums of understanding for managing conditional shellfishing areas and initiates emergency closures. The Bureau also inspects and licenses all commercial shellfish harvest-ers and dealers in Connecticut.

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CONNECTICUT RECREATIONAL SHELLFISH SPECIES



Eastern or Atlantic oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*), also known as the "Blue Point Oyster." Recreational size minimum 3"*. The eastern oyster grows in intertidal and subtidal waters attached to rocks, pilings, and shells. Oysters can obtain a length of up to 6".

Hard, Round, or Quahog clam (*Mercenaria mercenaria*), recreational size minimum 1.5" long or 1" thick*. Quahogs are very common in Long Island Sound. This clam may grow to five inches and greater than 30 years of age.



Long, Soft-shelled, or Steamer clams (*Mya arenaria*), recreational size minimum 1.5" long*. The soft-shell clam is common in sandy and muddy bottoms. This clam digs a deep burrow and extends its long siphon to the surface to feed.

Razor or Jackknife clam (*Ensis directus*), recreational size minimum 1.5" long*. Razor clams commonly inhabit the same sediment types as soft-shell clams. These clams can grow up to 10" in length.



Blue Mussel (*Mytilus edulis*), no recreational size minimum. The edible blue mussel is found throughout Long Island Sound. It attaches to most hard surfaces with its byssal threads.

Whelks, Conch, Winkles, or Scungilli (*Busycon species*), recreational limit of one half bushel per day*. Several species of large edible snails are common in Long Island Sound. They are usually found on sandy bottoms.



* Daily catch and minimum size limits may vary from town to town. Check with the local Town Clerk or Shellfish Commission for daily catch and size limits.

DO YOU KNOW?

- You should be aware of the risks of *Vibrio* wound infections during warmer months. Scan this QR code for information on the risks of *Vibrio* infections:



- Anyone who intends to sell shellfish must be licensed by the Department of Agriculture.
- Quahogs, cherrystones, hard clams, littlenecks, and round clams are all names for the same animal, *Mercenaria mercenaria*. In the marketplace, clams are separated into different size classes: littlenecks (width 1-2"), topnecks (width 2-3"), cherrystones (width 3-3.5"), and chowders (width 3.5+").
- Tools used to harvest shellfish must have openings or spacing between the teeth or prongs of one inch or greater. Carry a shellfish ring, slot or gauge to measure your shellfish, be sure to carry .
- Each coastal town manages a recreational shellfishing program based largely on the popularity of harvesting hard clams. Certain towns require local shellfish harvesting licenses or permits to shellfish in their town. Size and daily quantities vary by town. Shellfishing regulations are established and enforced to protect human health and also to preserve the living marine resources and ecosystem.

Portions of this material were excerpted from "A Guide to Recreational Shellfishing in Connecticut" Connecticut Sea Grant College Program. Groton, CT. CTSG-04-06 and Connecticut Sea Grant Publication Number: CTSG-06-07 Connecticut Sea Grant College Program.

For more information about Connecticut Sea Grant visit <http://www.seagrants.uconn.edu>

RECREATIONAL SHELLFISHING REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

Consuming raw or undercooked shellfish can lead to serious illness and even death in the following groups of people:

Individuals with Cancer, Liver Disease (from hepatitis, cirrhosis or alcoholism), Diabetes, HIV, chronic bowel and stomach diseases (including: previous stomach surgery or *low stomach acid due to antacid use*), Hemochromatosis (iron disorder), and/or any illness or medical treatment that results in a weakened immune system

Older adults ages 65 years and up, pregnant individuals and children under 6 years of age are also considered high risk and should avoid consuming raw or undercooked oysters.

If you have a wound (including from a recent surgery, piercing, or tattoo), stay out of saltwater or brackish water, if possible. This includes wading at the beach.

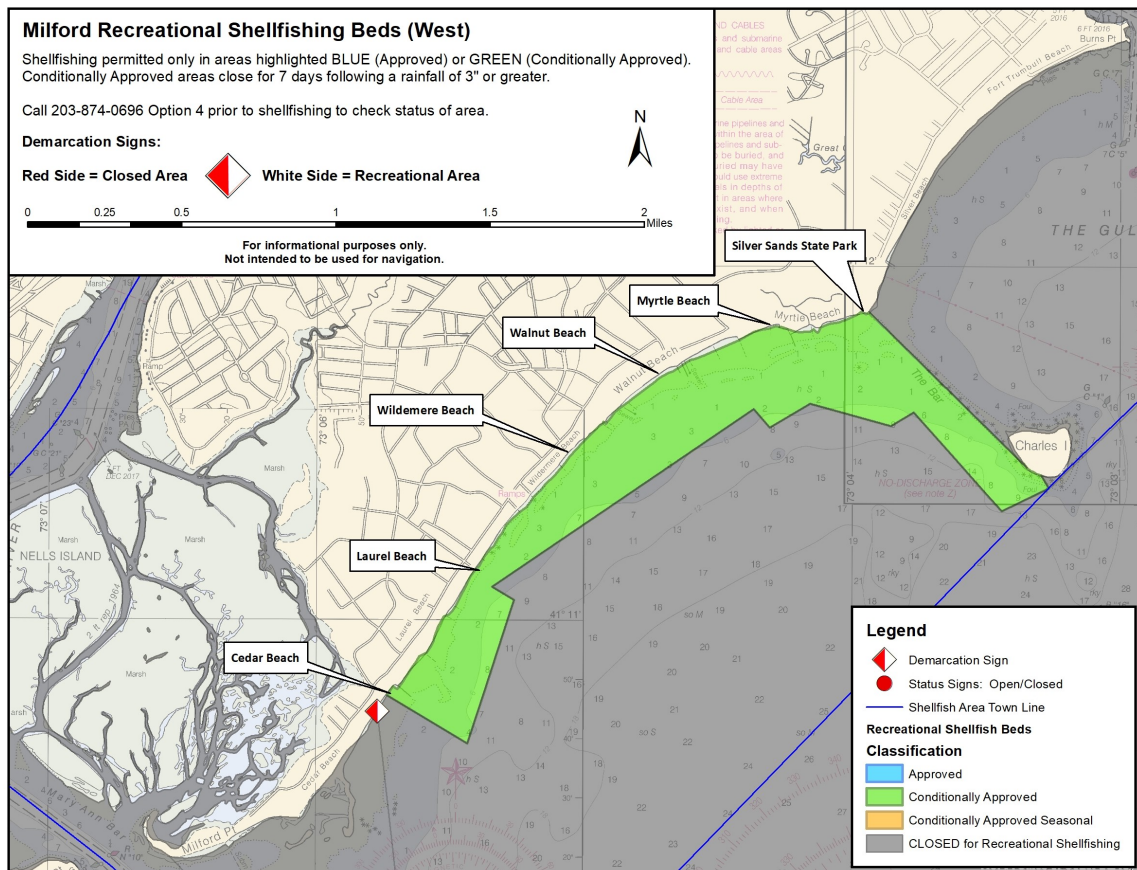
Harvest is limited to 1/2 bushel of shellfish (clams, mussels, oysters) per day taken during daylight hours. (1/2 bushel is approximately one 5 gallon bucket.)

Implements used to collect shellfish must have openings or spacing between the teeth of 1" or greater.

Oysters less than 3" in length, hard clams less than 1" in thickness or that will pass through a ring of 1.5" internal diameter, and Soft-shell clams (steamers) less than 1.5" in length must be returned to the harvest area.

Recreationally harvested shellfish are only to be consumed by the harvester and family members. *Recreational harvesters can not offer their shellfish for sale or barter.*

Harvesting is limited to Approved and Conditionally Approved-Open areas, excluding franchised or leased shellfish beds. *Recreational shellfishing in closed or unclassified areas, whether for bait or personal consumption is illegal.* Illegally shellfishing in closed areas subjects the harvester and his/her family to public health risks and fines.



Milford Recreational Shellfishing Beds (East)

Shellfishing permitted only in areas highlighted BLUE (Approved) or GREEN (Conditionally Approved). Approved areas close following a rainfall of 3" or greater.

Bayview Beach, Point Beach, Pond Point to Morningside Beach are the only areas east of Milford Gulf available for recreational shellfishing. An area extending approximately 700 feet from the mouth of Calf Pen Creek is closed.

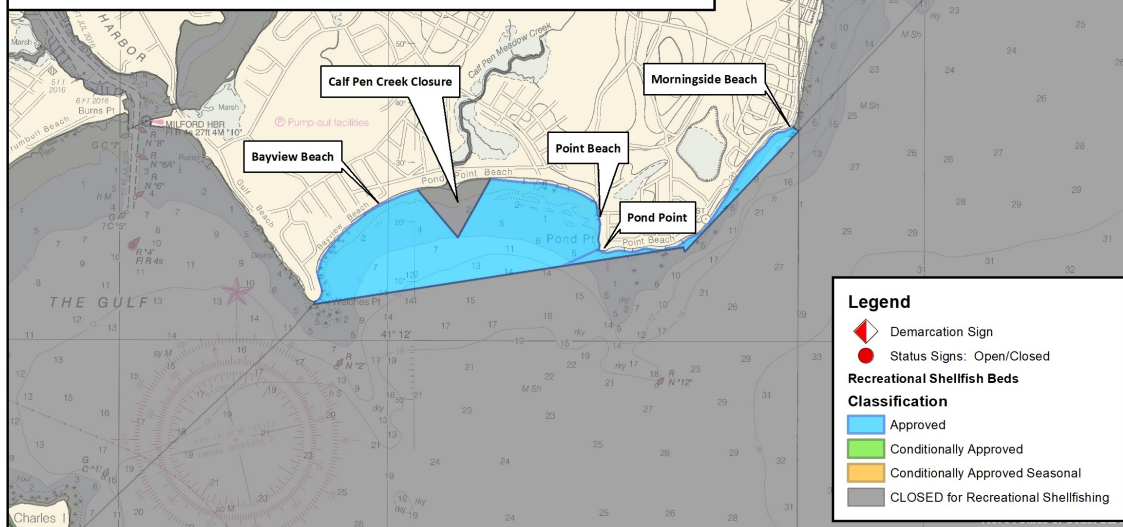
Call 203-874-0696 Option 4 prior to shellfishing to check status of area.

Demarcation Signs:

Red Side = Closed Area White Side = Recreational Area



For informational purposes only. Not intended to be used for navigation.



RECREATIONAL SHELLFISHING REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

Shellfish should be immediately placed on ice after harvest and held under refrigeration in a self draining container until consumed. *Never* store or soak shellfish in water or hang them overboard from a dock or boat outside of the harvest area. Shellfish are filter feeders and accumulate and concentrate contaminants from areas not approved for harvest as a natural part of their feeding process.

In the interest of preventing the growth of non-indigenous species, disease and parasites, no shellfish taken from, or originating from, areas outside of Connecticut's Long Island Sound may be placed, planted or disposed of in Long Island Sound and its tributaries without the written approval of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture.

PLEASE NOTE: APPROVED AND CONDITIONALLY APPROVED AREAS NOTED ON THE MAPS ARE SUBJECT TO CLOSURE IN THE EVENT OF A SEWAGE SPILL OR HEAVY RAINFALL EVENT. YOU MUST CONTACT THE BUREAU OF AQUACULTURE OFFICE AT 203-874-0696 TO MAKE SURE THE AREA IS OPEN BEFORE YOU HARVEST SHELLFISH.