

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

FISHERIES ADMINISTRATIVE
ORDER NO. 235
(Series of 2010)

SUBJECT: Safety and Quality Control Standards for PSP

This Order establishing the safety and quality control standard for paralytic shellfish poison (PSP) is hereby issued pursuant to Section 67 of RA 8550 (Fisheries Code) and RA 7394 (Consumer's Act) for guidance of all concerned.

Section 1. Definition. - The terms as used herein shall be construed as follows:

- a. *Paralytic shellfish poison.* - A water soluble, heat and acid resistant marine toxin produced by dinoflagellates (*Pyrodinium bahamense var. compressum* *Gymnodinium catenatum* and some *Alexandrium* species) causing symptoms characterized by nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tingling sensation in the lips and extremities, numbness and in severe cases, death.
- b. *Saxitoxin.* - A neurotoxin found in *Pyrodinium bahamense var. Compressum Gymnodinium Catenatum* and some *Alexandrium* species acting on the nervous system by blocking the sodium channels.
- c. *Shellfish Advisory.* - An official statement declaring a certain water area to be either toxin free or positive for toxic red tide rendering shellfish therein unfit for human consumption.
- d. *Shellfish Bulletin.* - An official statement issued regularly declaring specific water areas of the country to be either toxin free or positive for toxic red tide.

Section 2. Regulatory Limit. - A regulatory limit of 60µg/STX equivalent/100g shellfish meat is hereby established for both domestic and foreign markets. Toxicity levels in shellfish of 60µg/STX equivalent/100g or above is considered positive for PSP.

Section 3. Procedure. - The following procedure shall apply in the monitoring of paralytic shellfish poison.

- a. The Marine Biotoxin Section of the Fisheries Resources Management Division shall conduct regular surveys of major shellfish areas and closely monitor other areas with history of paralytic shellfish poison and *Pyrodinium bahamense var. compressum* and to serve as repository of monitoring data.
- b. The Fisheries Regional Offices through their laboratories shall take the lead in monitoring activities in their areas of jurisdiction.
- c. Survey of Manila Bay shall be conducted twice a week. Sampling frequency for critical areas shall be done three (3) times a week during the transition of seasons.
- d. The survey at other areas with previous history of PSP shall be done at least once a month when free from PSP toxin but weekly when area is positive for PSP.
- e. Shellfish samples shall be analyzed for toxin content and water samples for determination of presence of PSP causative organisms.

Section 4. Issuance of shellfish bulletins and advisories

a. Criteria for issuing advisories

- 1) Advisory that shellfish from a particular area as supported by monitoring data is positive for PSP shall be issued if the toxin content in shellfish is 60µg/STX equivalent/100g or above.
- 2) Advisory that shellfish from an area previously positive contaminated is free from PSP as supported by monitoring data shall be issued if analysis results of 60µg/STX equivalent/100g shellfish meat is obtained for all sampling stations for three (3) consecutive weeks.

b. Shellfish bulletins and advisories shall be released according to the following procedure:

- 1) The Marine Biotoxin Section shall review the data from its own monitoring activities and those submitted by satellite laboratories of the Fisheries Regional Offices and Local Government Units (LGUs).
- 2) The data gathered shall determine which coastal areas are either positive or negative of PSP and shall be the basis for the issuance of the corresponding shellfish bulletin.
- 3) Shellfish bulletins shall be issued every two weeks and whenever shellfish advisories are issued.
- 4) The Marine Biotoxin Section shall draft the bulletin and advisory based on monitoring data collected in accordance with Annexes 1 and 2.
- 5) The FRMD Chief shall review the shellfish bulletins and advisories before submission to the BFAR Director.
- 6) The Marine Biotoxin Section shall immediately fax the signed shellfish bulletins and advisories to the Fisheries Regional Offices Local Government Units (LGUs), print and broadcast media, Philippine Information Agency (PIA) and the Department of Health (DOH).
- 7) The FROs and LGUs shall be responsible in disseminating the information received in their jurisdictional area.

Section 5. Prohibition. - It shall be unlawful for any person, natural or juridical, to offer for sale and distribute in commerce shellfish that are found to be beyond the safety limit established under Section 2 of this Order, violation of which shall be punishable by a fine of not less than one thousand pesos (P1,000.00) but not more than ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than two (2) months but not more than one (1) year, or both such fine and imprisonment in the discretion of the court.

Section 6. Effectivity. - This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and/or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation and fifteen (15) days after registration with the office of the National Administrative Register.

ISSUED this 28th day of April 2010 at Quezon City, Metropolitan Manila. Philippines.

(SIGNED)

ATTY. BERNIE G. FONDEVILLA

Secretary

Recommended by:

(SIGNED)

MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.

Director

Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources

(SIGNED)

SALVADOR S. SALACUP

OIC, Undersecretary for Fisheries and Livestock

Chairman, NFARMC