

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Spill Prevention and Response/ Spill Prevention and Response

Operating/Capital Budget (CCS HB 69(brf sup maj fld H/S))

It is the intent of the legislature that the Department of Environmental Conservation submit to the legislature an execution plan detailing how they will pursue remediation of known sites and prevention of new spills. The report should be submitted to the Co-Chairs of Finance and the Legislative Finance Division by December 1st, 2021.

COMPLIANCE MAY BE DETERMINED AT A LATER DATE

The Division of Spill Prevention and Response will report as required under AS 46.08.060 to report to the Legislature biennially by the 10th day of the first regular session, including details of activities and remediation pursuits of known contaminated sites and the efforts taken to prevent new spills. The Department has chosen to provide the report on an annual basis in recent years in order to be timelier and more transparent. Annual and biennial reports for the years 2005 through 2020 can be found at <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/reports/>.

Legislative Fiscal Analyst Comment: The Department is required to provide the report on the 10th day of regular session every other year. The last year that the Department provided a report was SLA2021. The Department is not statutorily required to submit another report until SLA2023.

Environmental Health/ Environmental Health

Operating/Capital Budget (CCS HB 69(brf sup maj fld H/S))

It is the intent of the legislature that the Department of Environmental Conservation submit recommendations on how to reduce the cost of shellfish testing for both the industry and the State, to the Legislative Finance Division and Finance Committee Co-Chairs by December 1, 2021.

As requested, this response is a recommendation on how to reduce the cost of shellfish testing for both the industry and the State. The Department of Environmental Conservation shellfish permitting and compliance program is an “approved” federal program, meaning that shellfish dealers within Alaska may ship to interstate and international commercial shellfish markets. FDA evaluates various aspects of Alaska’s program to determine conformance with the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP). FDA provides these reports to the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC), of which Alaska is a member in good standing, meaning that FDA has deemed the work performed by the Department’s Food

Safety & Sanitation program and Environmental Health laboratory meets the NSSP requirements.

The FDA's requirements do not allow the Department to reduce testing standards with the commercial shellfish testing. Baseline infrastructure (supplies, certified staff, equipment, etc.) must be maintained for routine regulatory testing as well as response capability in the event of foodborne illness outbreaks.

The Environmental Health Laboratory is the only laboratory in Alaska approved to conduct regulatory testing for commercial shellfish, and the Department is not aware of any private laboratories actively seeking approval through FDA.

The best way to reduce the cost per sample would be economies of scale gained by supporting the growth of the mariculture industry. The more samples received for testing, the less it will cost per sample.