Appendix VIII
Protocol for Emergency Closure of any Shellfish Growing Area

CSSP control agencies must be able to react quickly to an emergency situation in order to place an affected shellfish growing area in the closed status. An emergency situation may include, but is not limited to, events such as unusual weather, flooding, and spills of oil, toxic chemicals or sewage. Emergency closures do not include those resulting from elevated biotoxin levels, nor conditionally managed areas based on the operation of wastewater treatment and collection systems.

1. CSSP control agencies will advise, as soon as possible, all members of the appropriate RISC of their action in response to an emergency situation.

2. Subject to item 3, upon notification of an emergency event or determination that changes in environmental conditions pose a risk of contamination to shellfish, EC and/or the CFIA will provide a recommendation, including closure boundaries, to DFO to place the affected shellfish growing area in the closed status.

3. Where pre-determined impact areas and/or standing recommendations for closure boundaries have been provided by EC and/or the CFIA, and DFO has been notified of an emergency event within the impact area, DFO will place the affected shellfish growing areas in the closed status. (Shellfish harvesters and processors will be advised of closures through established communication procedures.)

4. EC and/or the CFIA will provide a recommendation to DFO if, based on further evaluation of information, there is a need to rescind or modify the size of the closure. DFO will modify or rescind the closure accordingly.

5. The closure of the affected area will remain in place for at least 7 days. At this time, EC and/or the CFIA will evaluate the situation and advise DFO if changes in the closure status are warranted. This may be achieved through sampling of water and shellstock to test for factors relevant to the conditions in the area that led to the closure recommendation. Shellstock are sampled from sites that are representative of the harvest area and shall not:
   - exceed 230 faecal coliform MPN/100g in approved areas,
   - exceed 2300 faecal coliform MPN/100g in restricted areas that are harvested for depuration and/or,
   - be contaminated with poisonous or deleterious substances.

The number of shellstock sites to be sampled will be determined on a case by case basis and is dependent on the size of the area and the location of shellfish resource.
6. If the emergency closure is in response to a discharge of untreated or partially-treated sewage, the affected area may be re-opened upon recommendation either:

   a. after a minimum of 7 days, based on sampling of water and shellstock from representative locations within the closed area, or
   b. without sampling, following a 21 day period after cessation of the last discharge event.

7. Once satisfied that the quality of the water (by EC) and shellstock (by the CFIA) are deemed to no longer pose a health risk, each agency will recommend to DFO that the area return to the open status.