

DPI Primefact

Protecting NSW Waterways from AVG

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Aquatic Biosecurity

Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis

Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG) is a viral disease which affects the animal's nervous system, resulting in curling of the foot, swelling of the mouth, weakness, and death. AVG affects both blacklip and greenlip abalone and their hybrids, there is no evidence AVG has any effect on human health. AVG is not known to occur in NSW abalone populations.

AVG can be spread through water by infected abalone or abalone product like offal, shells or mucus.

People can also spread AVG through unclean fishing equipment like wetsuits, divers' gloves, anchors, rock lobster pots and ropes, and through contact with infected abalone or bottom habitats.

AVG is listed as a prohibited matter under the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015*. This means it is illegal to buy, sell or move the disease or infected abalone. It is required by law to notify Aquatic Biosecurity of any suspicion of AVG on **1800 675 888**.

Preventing AVG spread into NSW waters

NSW DPI is committed to safeguarding the health and well-being of NSW abalone populations, associated industries and the environment. To manage the potential risk of impacts of AVG on NSW wild abalone the Biosecurity (Abalone viral ganglioneuritis) Control Order is in place. The Control Order prohibits the movement of live Tasmanian, South Australian and Victorian western and central zone wild caught abalone, and live South Australian and Victorian farmed abalone.

Commercial or recreational fishers, boaters and divers who have recently used fishing equipment, dive gear or a vessel in the Victorian western or central abalone zone or in South Australian waters must take the following steps to reduce the spread of AVG before entering NSW waters.



Figure 1: Diseased abalone displaying an AVG symptom of curling foot (Photo: DPI Victoria)

Vessels

Remove all organic matter from the inside and outside of the vessel and dispose of to landfill, away from the water. Wash vessel with freshwater and detergent away from all waterways.

Wetsuits and dive equipment

- Use neoprene wash for wet suits and mild liquid soap for dive equipment. Soak in soapy freshwater for 30 minutes, rinse and allow to air dry.
 - Appropriate decontamination should be applied, e.g., the use of 200 ppm effective chlorine. Full details and other acceptable methods are available on the [Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority's AVG decontamination permit No: PER92725](#).
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What to do if you encounter infected abalone

Commercial or recreational fishers, boaters and divers who encounter or who think they have encountered AVG must:

- Wash their hands with soapy freshwater.
- Spray waterproof clothing with soapy freshwater, rinse and allow to air dry.
- Wash clothes in laundry detergent.
- Carefully follow decontamination guidelines on all fishing / diving gear.

Protecting NSW abalone

There are a simple things people can do to help keep NSW abalone free from disease.

- Live abalone from another state must not be brought into NSW, unless within the requirements of the Biosecurity (Abalone viral ganglioneuritis) Control Order.
 - Dead abalone purchased for human consumption may have been sourced from outside of NSW. Using products intended for human consumption in NSW waters increases the risk of spreading aquatic diseases. Do not use abalone or abalone gut for bait or berley. It is illegal.
 - Dispose of abalone shell, meat and gut in household rubbish, not at sea.
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Reporting

If you find dead abalone, especially clusters of shells, phone the 24-hour Emergency Animal Disease Hotline **1800 675 888** to report.

For more information visit the NSW DPI website www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/avg

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