

Chapter 322

(Senate Bill 83)

AN ACT concerning

~~Department of Natural Resources – Vibrio Notice Regulations~~
Environment – Vibrio Public Information Campaign

FOR the purpose of requiring the ~~Department of Natural Resources by regulation to provide for the inclusion of a Vibrio notice with certain recreational tidal fishing licenses, recreational crabbing licenses, and certificates of boat number; authorizing the Department by regulation to provide for the inclusion of a Vibrio notice with certain other licenses or authorizations; specifying the minimum information that a Vibrio notice must contain; and generally relating to Vibrio notice regulations~~ Department of the Environment, after certain consultation, to develop and implement a certain public information campaign about the health risks associated with the Vibrio bacteria in the waters of the State; requiring the public information campaign to identify certain facts relevant to Vibrio and Vibrio infections, target certain geographical areas and time periods, provide certain warnings relevant to Vibrio and Vibrio infections, emphasize certain measures, implement certain processes related to informing and preparing the medical community in the State for Vibrio infections, and provide a link to a certain Web site where additional information about Vibrio infections is available; requiring the Department to develop and implement the public information campaign on or before a certain date; making this Act an emergency measure; and generally relating to the development and implementation of a public information campaign about the Vibrio bacteria.

~~BY adding to~~

~~Article – Natural Resources
Section 4-222
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2012 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)~~

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That ~~the Laws of Maryland read as follows:~~

~~Article – Natural Resources~~

~~4-222.~~

~~(A) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL BY REGULATION PROVIDE FOR THE INCLUSION OF A VIBRIO NOTICE WITH EACH NEW OR RENEWED;~~

~~(i) RECREATIONAL TIDAL FISHING LICENSE;~~

~~(II) RECREATIONAL CRABBING LICENSE; AND~~

~~(III) CERTIFICATE OF BOAT NUMBER.~~

~~(2) THE DEPARTMENT MAY BY REGULATION PROVIDE FOR THE INCLUSION OF A VIBRIO NOTICE WITH ANY OTHER LICENSE OR AUTHORIZATION ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.~~

~~(B) THE VIBRIO NOTICE SHALL, AT A MINIMUM:~~

~~(1) NOTIFY THE INDIVIDUAL THAT VIBRIO BACTERIA MAY BE PRESENT IN STATE WATERS DURING CERTAIN TIMES OF THE YEAR;~~

~~(2) WARN THAT IN RARE INSTANCES SERIOUS INFECTION MAY RESULT WHEN VIBRIO COMES INTO CONTACT WITH AN OPEN WOUND; AND~~

~~(3) PROVIDE A LINK TO THE DEPARTMENT WEB SITE WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL CAN GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT VIBRIO.~~

~~SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2015.~~

(a) The Department of the Environment, in consultation with the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and other interested State, local, and private stakeholders, shall develop and implement an appropriate public information campaign about the health risks associated with the Vibrio bacteria in the waters of the State.

(b) The Vibrio public information campaign shall:

(1) identify that Vibrio is a naturally occurring bacteria that is a rare waterborne cause of illness nationwide;

(2) target the geographical areas and times of the year that the Vibrio bacteria is most active;

(3) warn of the dangers of contracting a Vibrio infection and that certain pre-existing health conditions may increase the risk posed by Vibrio;

(4) emphasize preventative measures, identify symptoms to facilitate early detection, and encourage individuals with symptoms to seek immediate medical attention;

(5) implement processes to ensure that the medical community in the State is properly notified of the risks and symptoms of a Vibrio infection and is properly prepared for the treatment of a Vibrio infection; and

(6) provide a link to the Web site of the Department of the Environment where additional information about Vibrio infections is available.

(c) The Department of the Environment shall develop and implement the Vibrio public information campaign required under this Act on or before June 15, 2015.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is enacted.

Approved by the Governor, May 12, 2015.