

## What you can do?

If you find yourself in an area that you suspect is infected with the virus or some other disease:

- » Ensure that you decontaminate your fishing vessels, all equipment, wet suits and gloves between dive sites.
- » Dispose of abalone shell, meat and gut appropriately.

**Decontamination** must be undertaken away from the water's edge so that soapy water does not affect the health of waterways, and as soon as reasonably possible after leaving the water.

### Vessels:

- » All organic matter from inside and outside the vessel should be removed. A carwash could be considered for this purpose.

### Wetsuits and Dive Equipment:

- » Wetsuits should be washed with a neoprene wash (available from dive and surf shops) although a mild liquid soap or shampoo will suffice.
- » Dive tanks, buoyancy vests, regulators and masks that have not come into contact with abalone can be washed down in soap-free freshwater.
- » Equipment that has come into contact with abalone, such as catch bags, gloves, dive knives and measuring devices, should be soaked in soapy freshwater for 30 minutes and then rinsed.

### People and clothing:

Divers who come into contact with abalone should:

- » Wash their hands with soapy water.
- » Spray any waterproof clothing with soapy freshwater and rinse.
- » On returning home, wash clothes with laundry detergent.
- » Decontaminated vessels, wetsuits, dive equipment and clothing should be allowed to dry.

### Disposal

Abalone shell, viscera (meat and gut) should not be:

- » shucked (taken from the shell) at sea,
- » dumped into the sea,
- » used as fishing bait.

*Take your abalone catch home and dispose of the waste with your household rubbish.*



This brochure was developed in association with:



[www.vada.com.au](http://www.vada.com.au)



Western Abalone Divers Association

Eastern Zone Abalone Industry Association

(EZAIA)



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SMARTER FISHING FOR INDUSTRY

# HELP stop the spread of... Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG)



## INFORMATION GUIDE

For marine users in  
Victoria

# What is Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG)?

- » Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG) affects the nervous tissue of abalone and rapidly causes death.
- » AVG is the first of its kind found in Australian waters.
- » Abalone with the virus can appear to be weak. In some cases protrusion of the mouth part may be visible and/or the edges of the foot curling inwards to expose clean shiny shell.



- » The Virus can be spread through direct contact, through the water column or something in the water such as mucus produced by abalone.
- » The virus only affects abalone species.
- » The Victorian Chief Veterinary Officer has advised that there are no known or likely public health or food safety implications associated with this virus.

## What to do if you encounter sick abalone?

If you find patches of weak or dead abalone that you suspect may be infected with the virus :

Please call the...

**Disease Watch Hotline (1800 675 888)**

or the

**Fish Reporting Hotline 13FISH (133474)**

When making the call it would be good if you could provide the following information:

- » GPS Co-ordinates of the reef and/or full description of the area where the abalone was found (including depth of water or whether it was washed up on the beach or rocks);
- » Contact details of diver or fisher.
- » Basis for suspecting disease (clinical signs, number of dead or dying abalone).

You may be asked to collect a sample.

- » Collected samples should be sealed in a plastic bag and kept at as low a temperature as possible
- » A zip bag or a tied shopping bag would be suitable.

For further information go to: [www.dpi.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au)



## What are commercial fishers doing about bio-security?

- » Commercial divers have adopted strict bio-security protocols, that are included in the *Abalone Harvesting Code of Practice*.
- » Bio-security protocols have also been established for other commercial fishers.

For more information on commercial dive sector in Victoria go to: [www.vada.com.au/Virus/Virus.htm](http://www.vada.com.au/Virus/Virus.htm)

