



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Save our Shells? SOS is a pilot oyster shell recycling program in Mississippi that highlights the impact that collecting oyster shells from local restaurants can have on restoring oyster reef habitat. This restoration begins with local restaurants collecting the shells. Those shells, once cured, are then placed in coastal waters to restore oyster habitat.

Why is Save our Shells important? Oysters are a keystone species that naturally filter and clean the surrounding water. Oyster reefs provided habitat for fish, crabs, and shrimp, and serve as a natural breakwater to reduce coastal erosion and buffer the coastline.

Who can participate in the Save our Shells program? The program is aimed towards local restaurants on the Mississippi coast in the lower three coastal counties.

Is there a cost to participate in this recycling program? There is no cost for participating in this program

As a restaurant representative, how can I participate in this program? Each oyster shell in your restaurant can be disposed of in a bin designated for oyster shells only (separate from plastic, lemons and other debris). The Nature Conservancy will pick up bins left outside of your restaurant on scheduled pick-up days.

Who will be providing the trashcans? The Nature Conservancy provides trash cans.

My restaurant is very packed during the weekend with customers eating oysters. Who decides how many trashcans? A restaurant can choose how many trashcans they need. The Nature Conservancy estimates 3-4 trashcans per restaurant to start.

How often will The Nature Conservancy pick up the oysters? The Nature Conservancy coordinates with restaurants and shell collection vendors on pickup with the aim of setting up a regular weekly schedule that accommodates pick-up on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Who can I contact if my restaurant wants to participate in the Save Our Shells program? Contact The Nature Conservancy at saveourshells@tnc.org. Once enrolled, you receive a point-of-contact with a member of our staff.

Can a restaurant use social media to promote Save of Shells program? Yes, we anticipate that The Nature Conservancy will be providing quarterly memos and photos for uploading.