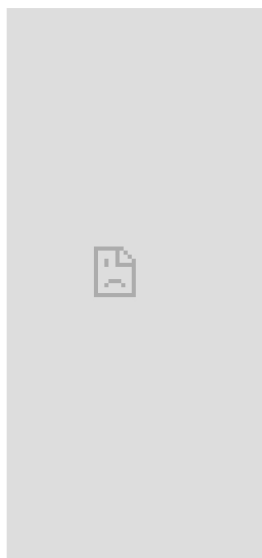


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EMERGENCY ANGLER ALERT: DEAD REDS, COURTESY OF OMEGA

In early July an Omega Protein net broke, according to the company, spilling tens of thousands of dead menhaden across Virginia's Eastern Shore shoreline from Cherrystone to Cape Charles. Now we learn that this past Monday, an Omega boat "released" so many dead fish that Kiptopeke State Park staff had to close the beaches. A Park Alert on the park website currently reads "The swimming beach and southern beach are closed for cleanup from a fish spill." Omega immediately began an aggressive cleanup effort, and perhaps most disturbingly, ShoreDailyNews is reporting that there were people on the beach "picking up red drum that were among the menhaden washed up on the shore, who then transported them to one of the nine menhaden boats that were still in the area." Too late, Omega - a coverup simply won't work in this day and age, as the proof is already out there:



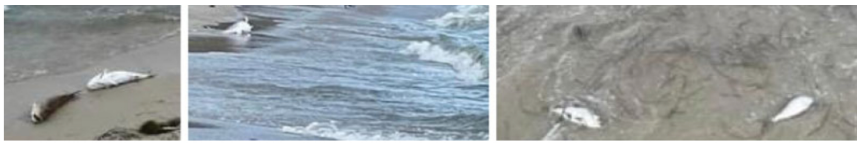
Along with this video, plenty of pictures have been taken of dead red drum among the bunker, washed up on the beach.



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Virginia's beaches are littered with dead Omega bunker, again, but this time there are red drum in the mix as well.

Virginia remains the last state in the union to allow a menhaden reduction fishery in its enclosed waters, and these fish spills and kills are nothing new. Last September Hampton Roads was inundated by 400,000 menhaden, and since 2018 Omega Protein reported 13 spills averaging 121,000 fish each. Imagine: this is merely the *visible* damage being done.

There's plenty to argue about when it comes to the menhaden fishery and there are two sides to every story. But FishTalk is not a newspaper and we're not obligated to provide you anglers with their side of the story. We've all heard it before and frankly we're BEYOND sick of it. If you want to get their take, feel free to go to [Omega's website](#). Look at the puppy pictures and read all about how responsible they are, and do your honest best not to throw up in your mouth.

That said, one would think that moving this operation out of the Bay would be a no-brainer. Perhaps Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin will prove common sense can outweigh financial interests and disregard the fact that Omega contributed \$25,000 to his campaign. Maybe the recent petition organized by a coalition of organizations will open his eyes and garner the Governor's support (you can [add your name to the petition here](#)) to end the reduction fishery in the Bay. And perhaps the photos and videos being collected in Virginia, along with documented [redfish kills among menhaden reduction boats](#) in Louisiana, will finally prove sufficient in refuting Omega's claim that it's a "rare event for menhaden nets to interact with red drum or any other species."

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Time will tell. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of fish rot on the beaches of Virginia... and we wonder why a declining striped bass population is malnourished?

REDRUM

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