

NEWS RELEASE

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Exciting Renovations Coming to the Virginia Aquarium

Harbor seal exhibit will undergo renovations in early April

(Virginia Beach, VA) One of the Virginia Aquarium's most visible and iconic areas, the harbor seal exhibit, will receive some special attention in early April 2018 with an anticipated reopening in mid-June 2018. The renovations will include painting the pool bottom, resealing the pool, and polishing the acrylic for better viewing opportunities.

During these renovations, the seals will be making a trip to Florida. All four male harbor seals will head to Fort Walton Beach, where they will stay until completion of the exhibit renovations. The seals will stay at an Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA)-accredited facility while in Florida, along with some Virginia Aquarium staff members. These members of the animal care staff will temporarily relocate to Florida with the seals to maintain continuity of behavioral training and ensure that our seals receive the exceptional care they are used to. Additionally, the Aquarium's staff veterinarian and the Director of Husbandry will oversee and be directly involved in each step of the process, including travel down and from to the seals' temporary home.

While it will be difficult to say goodbye to the seals, even for a few short months, Aquarium staff anticipates welcoming them home when the harbor seals exhibit reopens.

Occurring concurrently with the harbor seals exhibit renovations, the Bay & Ocean Pavilion bathrooms in the lobby area will be renovated and the existing Café will be reimagined. Work begins on these projects in April 2018 with estimated completion for the Café in May 2018 and the renovated restrooms opening in mid-June 2018.

The restrooms will include new energy efficient and water efficient fixtures, as well as low-flow toilets aimed at reducing our carbon footprint. The all-new Café concept will bring an improved flow to ordering and paying for your meals and a revamped menu.

The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center is an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums whose mission is conservation through education. The Aquarium is located at 717 General Booth Boulevard, just south of Rudee Inlet in Virginia Beach. For more information on exhibits, movies, boat rides and special events, call (757) 385-FISH (3474), (TDD 385-4305) or visit www.VirginiaAquarium.com.

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