



## GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL USE LOBSTER FISHING IN CONNECTICUT

(Rev. 4/2023)

PERSONAL USE LOBSTER LICENSE .....	\$60.00
10 PERSONAL USE LOBSTER POT TAGS .....	\$2.00

**CLOSED SEASON: SEPTEMBER 8 THROUGH NOVEMBER 28**

### AUTHORIZES THE LICENSEE TO:

Take lobsters from Connecticut waters for personal use, not for sale, by the use of not more than ten lobster pots or traps, by hand, by skin diving, or by SCUBA diving. Personal use license holders may not set, haul, or have in the water more than ten pots per day.

### LICENSING AND NUMBERING REQUIREMENTS

A license is required by any person engaged in taking lobsters by hand, skin-diving or SCUBA diving. No license is required by those who accompany and assist the license holder when setting and tending pots or traps, however, the license holder must be present when pots or traps are set or tended. A license to take lobsters from Connecticut waters is required to bring ashore or possess on the waters of the State any lobsters except when such lobsters are brought from ashore or obtained from a person licensed to take lobsters. Persons not licensed to set or tend lobster pots are prohibited from these activities. A licensed lobster fisherman must have written permission from the owner on his person in order to possess, tend or set the pots of another fisherman. Both fishermen must be holders of the same type of lobster license, and no personal use lobster license holder may haul a total of more than 10 pots per day.

Licenses must be carried by the license holder during all times that the holder is engaged in the permitted activity. A numbered license plate will be issued with each license and must be displayed from all vessels used to take lobsters. Divers taking lobsters without the use of a boat must have the plate and their license available for inspection at their shore-based point of entry to the water. Pot tags, purchased with your license, must be permanently affixed to a main frame or uncut wire mesh on the top of the pot, excluding the door. In addition to the pot tags, your license plate number must be legibly branded on the top of all live cars, lobster pots and similar devices, in figures not less than 3/4 inch in height. If a used lobster pot is purchased, do not remove the former owner's number; simply place your number in the pot in the prescribed manner and retain the bill of sale as proof of purchase. The license plate number must also be branded or painted on all lobster pot buoys in figures not less than 3/4 inch in height. All of your lobster pot buoys must be the same color or pattern of coloring (to be selected by you). You must display one of your buoys in a conspicuous position when engaged in lobstering (i.e., on a pole mounted on the bow or cabin of your boat), so that it is visible from all directions.

### REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A daily record of lobstering activity is required on the form provided for this purpose. The form must be submitted at the end of the year. A report indicating "did not fish" is required if you did not lobster during the reporting period. Persons failing to report will be prohibited from renewing their license.

Individually identifiable catch information is confidential and protected by the Connecticut General Statutes from disclosure for any reason other than fisheries management, research, development, and conservation law enforcement.

### TRAP TAGS

All Personal Use Lobster License holders who intend fishing lobster pots must have a trap tag placed on each pot. If you did not obtain the tags with your license, you must complete another application and return it along with a check for \$2 to the **Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Licensing & Revenue Office, 79 Elm Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Hartford, CT 06106**. These tags will be valid from January 1 to December 31. If you are a SCUBA diver and will not fish lobster pots, you do not have to purchase tags. The pot limit for holders of the Personal Use Lobster Licenses remains 10 pots. Personal Use Lobster License holders who wish to acquire replacement tags due to loss of pots must complete the *Request for Replacement Trap Tags Affidavit*. **Do NOT** use a fishing license application form to request replacement tags. If you do so, the form and your check will be returned to you.



## GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR PERSONAL USE LOBSTER FISHING IN CONNECTICUT

1. The personal use lobster license authorizes you to take lobsters only from the Connecticut waters of LIS. If you intend to take lobsters from waters outside of Long Island Sound, contact the DEEP Marine Fisheries Program (860-434-6043) to be informed of applicable federal laws for lobstering in waters of the U. S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). There is a possession limit of six lobsters per person on board a recreational or dive vessel in the EEZ.

2. Lobster pots used in Connecticut waters must have an approved escape opening in the parlor section of the pot. The escape vent must be in an unobstructed location and must measure at least 2" by 5-3/4" rectangular or must consist of two 2-5/8" or larger circular openings. Lath spacing is an acceptable means of venting traps but warping or swelling of lath is no excuse for having a vent less than the approved dimension.

3. Wire or plastic lobster pots used in Connecticut waters must have a 3-3/4" X 3-3/4" escapement opening on the side or back of the "parlor" (catch compartment) of the pot and the opening must be covered by a panel which is degradable, or which is held in a closed position by degradable fasteners. If the panel is constructed of wood, it shall be composed of wood not thicker than 3/8" and shall include a rectangular opening of 2" X 5-3/4". If the panel is made of wire or plastic, it can be hinged and must be held in the closed position with uncoated, ferrous wire not more than 3/32" diameter or with untreated natural fiber (e.g., cotton, sisal, hemp, or manila). Note that federal rules may vary on the location of such panels. If you intend to set pots in the EEZ, contact The DEEP Marine Fisheries Program for current rules.

4. Lobster pots may not exceed 22,950 cubic inches, in any combination of length, height and width.

5. Possession of female lobsters bearing a v-notch mark at least one-eighth inch (1/8") in depth and tapering to a point in the flipper to the right of the center flipper as viewed from the top and rear of the lobster is prohibited. Possession of any female lobster which is mutilated in a manner that could obliterate such a mark is prohibited.

6. It is required that lobsters be measured in such a way that the body shell (carapace) is at least 3-3/8 inches in length and not greater than 5-1/4 inches. Lobster gauges measuring 3-3/8 inches between the points are available for \$4.00 from DEEP (Marine Fisheries Program, Old Lyme or Licensing and Revenue Unit, First Floor, 79 Elm Street, Hartford) and certain local outlets. It is recommended that this type of gauge be used and that it be checked frequently for accuracy. The following procedure should be used to measure lobsters: Insert one end of the gauge in the rear of the eye socket (to the rear of the eye "stalk"). Hold the gauge vertical and parallel with the centerline of the body shell. If the gauge does not reach the rear end of the body shell, the lobster is legal. If the gauge fits over the

shell, it must fit tightly to be legal. Any movement between the gauge and the body shell indicates that the lobster is less than the minimum legal length and must be returned to the water.

7. The possession of any lobster less than the minimum legal length (3-3/8 inches carapace length) or greater than the maximum legal length (5-1/4 inches carapace length) or the possession of any lobster bearing external eggs or the possession of any lobster from which eggs have been removed is prohibited. These lobsters must be released to the water immediately without avoidable injury.

8. Lobsters taken by SCUBA divers must be measured immediately on capture. Those taken by license holders other than SCUBA divers must be measured immediately on removal from the gear used to take them.

9. The landing or possession on the waters of this state of any portion of a lobster including meat, claws or tails is prohibited except when legally brought into such waters from ashore or except for immediate personal consumption. When taken by fishermen who have a federal lobster permit or a Connecticut license endorsed for lobstering in the EEZ, lobster parts may not be possessed regardless of where the lobsters were taken.

10. Setting or tending or assisting in the setting or tending of any lobster pot or lobster holding car from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise is prohibited.

11. Placing the buoys of lobster pots in U. S. Coast Guard marked navigable channels is prohibited. The setting of fixed fishing gear, including the buoys of personal use lobster pots (unbuoyed pots are exempt), is prohibited in mooring areas from May 1st through October 15th, and throughout the year in "fairways" if such areas are defined in an approved Harbor Management Plan. For the purposes of this regulation, "fairway" is defined as a harbor channel that is not marked by USCG channel markers but is designated as a navigation channel in an approved Harbor Management Plan. A mooring area is defined as an area in which vessels are commonly moored with permanent mooring tackle. Consult local authorities for information on any approved Harbor Management Plans.

12. The use of spears or hooks of any kind to take lobsters is prohibited. Possession of lobsters taken by any method that pierces the shell is prohibited.

13. Most finfish may be taken from personal use lobster pots for personal use. However, they must adhere to the sport fishery minimum lengths, creel limits and closed seasons. The taking of blue crabs and striped bass by lobster pots is prohibited.

14. The closed season for lobster in Long Island Sound is September 8 through November 28. All lobster gear must be removed from the water during the closure.

**For further information, contact:**

**DEEP MARINE FISHERIES PROGRAM (860)434-6043**

[deep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov](mailto:deep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov)

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP-FishingLicense>