

March 14, 2025

N25-04

Notice to Commercial Fishermen

COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSE RENEWAL DEADLINE REMINDER

Public Act 15-52, effective January 1, 2016, **requires commercial limited access (moratorium) licenses be renewed annually by March 31st**. License applications **MUST BE RECEIVED OR POSTMARKED BY MARCH 31st**. The law also **requires a Commercial Fishing Vessel Permit to be purchased annually** for the primary vessel identified on a limited access (moratorium) license for the license **to remain eligible** for renewal in the future. **Quota Managed Species Endorsements** for fluke, scup, and black sea bass also **require annual renewal by March 31st**

2025 CT DEEP Marine Fishing License Applications: The link or QR code will take you to the printable commercial fishing permit applications:



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

Please be sure to complete and print the appropriate application(s) for license(s) you wish to obtain or renew and mail or bring in your completed form(s) with payment to:

DEEP- License and Revenue Unit
P.O. Box 719
Old Lyme, CT 06371-0719

****PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU ARE NOT UP TO DATE ON YOUR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS, YOUR LICENSE RENEWAL(S) WILL NOT BE PROCESSED PER CGS SECTION 26-142a.****

Contacting DEEP Marine Fisheries:

For any questions regarding reports due, reporting requirements, obtaining additional logbooks or license applications, contact the CT DEEP Marine Fisheries Program by email at deep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov, or by calling 860.434.6043, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

We ask that you do not contact the DEEP License and Revenue Unit for such inquiries as they cannot assist you on these matters.

Staying Informed:

Visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Commercial/Commercial-Fishing> for all current commercial fishery possession limits, notices to fishermen, additional license forms and other useful information concerning commercial and recreational fishing in Connecticut.

REMINDERS:

The following possession limits are in effect for Connecticut's commercial fisheries:

Bluefish: Effective 0001 hours, Sunday, March 16th, 2025, the Connecticut landing limit for the commercial harvest of bluefish will be reduced to zero pounds. On May 1st, the bluefish commercial possession limit will be 800lbs.

American lobster: The minimum carapace length is 3-3/8 inches.

American eel: No possession limit. Minimum length is 9 inches.

Atlantic menhaden:

- The possession limit for commercial harvest of menhaden in CT waters is 12,000 pounds.
- For the landing of menhaden taken commercially from outside of CT waters, the possession limit is 120,000 pounds.
- **Call-in required:** To accurately monitor landings and manage the commercial quota, the Marine Fisheries Program and DEEP Environmental Conservation Police have developed a call-in system. When in possession of 6,000 pounds or more of menhaden and *prior to departure and again prior to landing*, fishermen must notify DEEP Environmental Conservation Police Dispatch by telephone at 860.424-3503.

Black Sea Bass:

- 1,250 pounds bi-weekly for holders of a Black Sea Bass License Endorsement.
- Bi-weekly periods begin Sunday 0001hrs and end 14 days later on Saturday at 2359 hours. The current bi-weekly period began Sunday, February 23rd and will run through Saturday, March 8th
- **Call-in required for black sea bass landings from lobster pots:** To provide for timely monitoring of black sea bass landings from lobster pots, the Marine Fisheries Program is continuing the **mandatory weekly call-in reporting requirement for black sea bass landings from lobster pots**. Any commercial fisherman landing black sea bass from lobster pots **is required to contact the Marine Fisheries Program weekly by calling 860-447-4323** and leaving a message with the following information: the fisherman's name, commercial fishing plate number, the reporting week ending date (reporting weeks run Sunday through Saturday) and total pounds of black sea bass landed from lobster pots during the reporting week. This DOES NOT apply to personal use lobster license holders.

Jonah crab: The possession limit in non-trap fisheries is 1,000 crabs. There is no possession limit in the lobster pot fishery. Connecticut licensing statutes do not allow crabs to be taken by pots other than lobster pots.

Scup:

- 50,000-pound scup commercial possession limit is currently in place through the remainder of the Federal Winter 1 period. No scup license endorsement is required during the Federal Winter 1 or Winter 2 periods (October 1 through April 30, inclusive).
- From lobster pots when in possession of lobsters: 10 fish. This does not apply to personal use lobster license holders.

Summer Flounder:

- 600 pounds bi-weekly for holders of a Summer Flounder License Endorsement. Call-in / Call-out is required prior to departure and again at least two hours prior to offloading. Call EnCon Police at 860.424.3503 (24/7) and provide vessel name, Captain's name, departure date, return date, port of landing and prior to offloading the hail weight of summer flounder onboard. A summer flounder license endorsement is required to land summer flounder.
- Bi-weekly periods begin Sunday 0001hrs and end 14 days later on Saturday at 2359 hours. The current bi-weekly period began Sunday, February 23rd and will run through Saturday, March 8th

Smooth dogfish: 500-pound possession limit.

Spiny dogfish: 7,500-pound possession limit. Spiny dogfish are managed under a regional annual quota. The fishery will close when 100% of the regional quota has been harvested.

Tautog: Closed. Open commercial seasons are: April 1-30th, July 1-Aug 31st, Oct 8-Dec 24th. Mandatory tagging is required for all commercially landed blackfish.

Weakfish: 100-pound possession limit.

Winter flounder: 50 pounds or 38 fish possession limit. Closed March 1st- April 14, 2025. Federally permitted vessels are permitted to land the higher federal limits of fish taken from federal waters.

All of the possession limits listed above apply to the aggregate of all persons on board the vessel per trip or per day whichever is the longer period of time. Transfer of these species between vessels at sea is prohibited. In any instance where there is a violation of the possession limit on board a vessel carrying more than one person when the catch is commingled, the violation shall be deemed to have been committed by the owner of the vessel, or the operator of the vessel, if the owner is not on board. When any person on a vessel is commercial fishing, the commercial possession limit applies to the entire vessel and no person on that vessel may also possess fish under a recreational creel limit.

The Department monitors landings and adjusts trip limits according to Department regulations in an attempt to provide fishing opportunity throughout the year for all participants in the commercial fishery. In addition, the Department strives to provide advance notification of trip limit changes, although this may not always be possible due to rapidly escalating or unanticipated landings. In such circumstances, only a short notification period may be possible.

The information provided in this notice is a summary of possession limits and other general rules only. For complete information on commercial fishing regulations please see: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/fishing/commercial/marinecirpdf.pdf>, or contact the DEEP Marine Fisheries Program by email at deep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov, by mail at PO Box 719, Old Lyme, CT 06371 or by calling 860.434.6043

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you are seeking a communication aid or service, have limited proficiency in English, wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint, or require some other accommodation, including equipment to facilitate virtual participation, please contact us at 860-418-5910 or by email at deep.accommodations@ct.gov. Any person needing an accommodation for hearing impairment may call the State of Connecticut relay number - 711. In order to facilitate efforts to provide an accommodation, please request all accommodations as soon as possible following notice of any agency hearing, meeting, program or event.