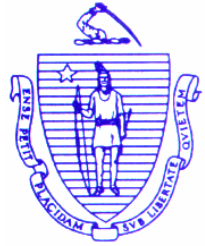




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Marine Fisheries Advisory

**CLARIFICATION REGARDING POSSESSION OF V-NOTCHED LOBSTERS FROM
LCMAS 2, 3, OUTER CAPE AND THE
SOUTHEASTERN RECREATIONAL LOBSTER AREA**

It has come to the Division of Marine Fisheries' (*Marine Fisheries*) attention that the current definition regarding possession of v-notched lobster in some commercial and recreational lobstering areas is more restrictive than the interstate plan (322 CMR 6.02). Specifically, *Marine Fisheries* inadvertently eliminated the tolerance for possession of lobsters that have setal hairs on the v-notch by dealers, commercial lobstermen in LCMAs 2, 3, and Outer Cape and recreational lobstermen in the Southeastern Recreational Lobster Area. Commercial fishermen fishing in LCMA 1 and recreational fishermen fishing in the Gulf of Maine Recreational Lobster Area are governed under a separate v-notch definition and rule that does not include this tolerance. *Marine Fisheries* has taken action to correct this error and effective Monday July 3, 2006 the rule on v-notched lobsters again will be consistent with the interstate plan.

For fishermen in LCMA 2, 3, Outer Cape and the Southeastern Recreational Lobster Area, as well as dealers: The possession rules on v-notched lobsters are less restrictive. In these areas it shall be unlawful to possess a v-notched female lobster if it has a "v-shaped notch" defined as a straight-sided triangular cut, **without setal hairs**, at least ¼" in depth and tapering to a point. Also it is prohibited to possess a female lobster that is mutilated in a manner that could hide, obscure or obliterate a v-shaped notch.

For fishermen in LCMA 1 and the Gulf of Maine Recreational Lobster Area (and in the Cape Cod Canal): There is a "zero tolerance" for possession purposes. This means recreational fishermen in the Gulf of Maine Recreational Lobster area and commercial lobstermen permitted to fish in Area 1 may not take a female lobster with a v-shaped notch of any size, with or without setal hairs. Commercial fishermen fishing in Area 1 also are required to carve a v-shaped notch in any eggbearing female lobster. A v-shaped notch is defined as a "V" shaped **straight-sided triangular cut** at least ¼ inch and not greater than a ½ inch-in depth and tapering to a sharp point in the flipper next to and to the right of the center flipper as viewed from the rear of the female lobster when the underside of the lobster is down.

In any area, it shall be unlawful to possess a female lobster that is mutilated in a manner that could hide, obscure or obliterate a v-shaped notch.

For further information and regulations please visit the
Marine Fisheries web site at: www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.