



Paul J. Diodati
Director

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

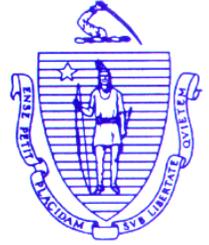
Division of Marine Fisheries

251 Causeway Street, Suite 400

Boston, Massachusetts 02114

(617)626-1520

fax (617)626-1509



Deval Patrick
Governor

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.

Secretary

Mary B. Griffin

Commissioner

July 19, 2013

Marine Fisheries Advisory

CLARIFICATION ON NEW WHELK REGULATIONS

On July 19, 2013 the Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*) promulgated a series of regulations aimed at improving the conservation of the state's channeled and knobbed whelk resources. *Marine Fisheries* has been informed that there is some uncertainty regarding these regulatory changes among the commercial fishermen that target these species. This advisory serves to further explain the new whelk regulations.

Minimum Shell Width Increase for Channeled Whelk (322 CMR 6.21)

The minimum shell width for channeled whelk will be increased by one-eighth of an inch per year for two years beginning in 2014. These new minimum shell width increases do not apply to knobbed whelks; the knobbed whelk minimum size remains at 2 ¾ inches. The channeled whelk minimum shell width increases will be implemented on the following schedule:

Effective Dates	Minimum Shell Width
Present – December 31, 2013	2 ¾ inches
January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014	2 7/8 inches
January 1, 2015 – Further Notice	3 inches

Sub-Legal Tolerance for Channeled and Knobbed Whelk (322 CMR 6.21)

The sub-legal tolerance for both channeled and knobbed whelks was eliminated as of July 19th 2013. Any person, commercial fisherman or seafood dealer in possession of sub-legal sized knobbed or channeled whelk is in violation of state regulations.

Marine Fisheries has established a standard method for gauging whelks and has fabricated a gauging tool to improve compliance with minimum shell width regulations. 2 ¾ inch gauges have been made available to the fishing industry and are still available at our New Bedford office.

Use of Horseshoe Crabs as Bait in Pot Gear (322 CMR 6.12)

As of July 19th 2013, it is unlawful for any pot gear, excluding conch pots and eels pots, to be baited with horseshoe crabs.

For a copy of *Marine Fisheries*' whelk regulations, please contact Jared Silva by e-mail (jared.silva@state.ma.us) or by phone (617-626-1534). For more information regarding the state's management of whelks and the conch pot fishery, please visit our website:

www.mass.gov/marinefisheries