

# Lobstering - Definitions

**Cancer Crab:** inclusive of both rock crabs (*Cancer irroratus*) and Jonah crabs (*Cancer borealis*).

**Closed Season:** the time during which fish cannot be lawfully taken.

**Crustacea:** all lobster, crabs, and shrimp.

**Edible Crab:** any crab other than the green crab.

**Blue Crab:** a marine crustacean of the species, *Callinectes sapidus*.

**Green Crab:** a marine crustacean of the species, *Carcinus meanus*.

**Lobster:** the common American Lobster of the species, *Homarus americanus*.

**V-notched female lobster:** means any female lobster bearing a v-shaped notch in the right flipper adjacent to the middle flipper or any female lobster which is mutilated in a manner which could hide, obscure, or obliterate such a mark. The right flipper will be examined when the underside of the lobster is down and its tail is toward the person making the determination. See area-specific v-notch definitions below:

**V-shaped notch (definition for LCMA 1):** It is unlawful for any commercial fisherman fishing or authorized to fish in LCMA 1 to possess any female lobster bearing a v-shaped notch of any size with or without setal hairs.

**V-shaped notch (definition for LCMAs 2,3,4,5,6):** It is unlawful for any commercial fisherman fishing or authorized to fish in LCMAs 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 as defined in 322 CMR 6.33 to possess any female lobster bearing a notch or indentation in the base of the flipper that is at least as deep as 1/8 inch, with or without setal hairs.

**V-shaped notch (LCMA OCC):** It is unlawful for any commercial fisherman fishing or authorized to fish in the Outer Cape Cod LCMA as defined in 322 CMR 6.33 to possess any female lobster that bears a notch or indentation in the base of the flipper that is at least as deep as 1/4 inch and tapering to a sharp point without setal hairs.

## Lobster/Crabs - Permits

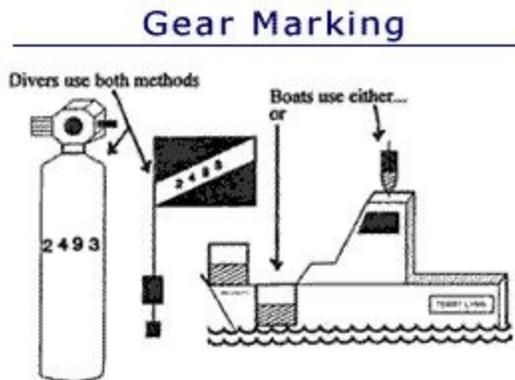
A lobster/crab permit is required of all persons to fish for lobster and edible crabs in coastal waters. To sell lobster and crabs, a commercial lobster/crab permit is required. However, no permit is required to take edible crabs for use by immediate family, provided that the number of crabs does not exceed fifty (50) in one day and that no pots or traps are used.

Minors under seventeen (17) years of age must have the written consent of a parent or guardian to obtain a lobster permit.

Non-residents of Massachusetts, who own in excess of \$5,000 in Massachusetts real-estate and who will seasonally reside in a Massachusetts coastal town, may obtain a non-commercial lobster permit to take lobsters and edible crabs from June through September for consumption only by licensee and family.

Trip-Level or Annual Catch Reports are required of some licenses. These forms are provided by the Division of Marine Fisheries. Renewal licenses will not be issued until a catch report has been filed.

## Lobster - Gears



Wooden lobster buoys may not be used.

All buoys and traps must be marked with licensee's Permit ID #. Non-commercial lobstermen shall also add the letter "N" prior to the last 5 digits of their Customer ID number, located in the upper right hand corner of the permit. The letter and permit numbers shall be at least 1/2" high x 1/8" thick. Buoys must be painted with licensee's approved color scheme. All lobster pots must have an official trap tag attached to the central bridge or cross member.

Before any buoy, pot, trap or lobster car is sold, transferred or given away, the owner must burn or cut the letter "T" after his old permit#. The new owner shall then burn or cut his permit# on the buoy, trap or lobster car.

All pots or traps used for the taking of lobsters in the coastal waters of the Commonwealth shall contain either a rectangular escape vent or two circular escape vents in the parlor section(s). The parlor section is the non-baited section of the pot from which lobsters are normally removed by the fisherman. Commercial lobstermen fishing in LCMA 1 shall rig their traps with rectangular vents that measure at least 1-15/16 inches by 5 3/4 inches or two circular vents that measure at least 2-7/16 inches. Commercial lobstermen fishing in LCMA 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or Outer Cape Cod shall rig their traps with rectangular vents that measure at least 2 inches by 5 3/4 inches or two circular vents that measure at least 2 5/8 inches.

The maximum volume of lobster pots is 22,950 cubic inches.

Lobster traps not constructed entirely of wood must contain an "ghost panel" with the following specifications:

1. The rectangular opening covered by the panel must be at least 3-3/4" x 3-3/4"

2. The panel must be constructed of, or fastened to the trap with one of the following untreated materials: wood lath; cotton, hemp, sisal or jute twine not greater than 3/16" in diameter; or non-stainless, uncoated ferrous metal not greater than 3/32" in diameter.
3. The door of the trap may serve as the escape panel if fastened with one of the specified materials.
4. The escape panel must be located in the parlor(s) of the trap, but may not be on the bottom.

Boats for lobstering must display the licensee's buoy colors on each side of the hull (or upon panels attached to each side of the hull), or upon a single panel attached to the top of the bow or by mounting a buoy at least 11" long, 4" diameter with licensee's colors, upright, at least 6" above the roof of the boat. Color scheme on hull or panels must be a solid color strip 4" high, 18" wide. The rectangle or square resulting must be bordered on all sides with a black strip at least 1" wide.

Divers must display their assigned number upon their air tank and a floating marker (upright single panel, at least 12" x 12", white background, black numerals at least 3" high, 1/2" in thickness or width of line on both sides of the marker). A group of divers may use only one floating marker listing the license number of each diver in the group.

## Lobster - Prohibitions

It is illegal for anyone, except the owner, to handle, destroy or molest any lobster or crab pot or other fishing gear, including any gear swept upon the shore, beaches or flats whether public or private, or to take fish therefrom.

Taking of lobsters and crabs from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise is strictly prohibited.

Spearing, dipping or dragging for lobsters is prohibited.

Removal of eggs from lobsters is prohibited. Egg-bearing lobsters or lobsters from which eggs have been removed must be immediately returned alive to the waters from which taken.

Mutilation of any lobster which affects its measurement or the possession of lobster parts shall be prima facie evidence that the lobster was less than the legal minimum size.

Taking v-notched female lobsters is strictly prohibited. V-notched female lobster must be immediately returned alive to the waters from which they were taken.