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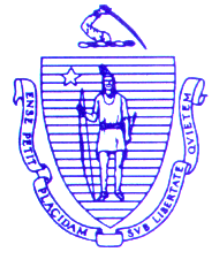
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Marine Fisheries Advisory

New Commercial Striped Bass Rule to Prevent Stockpiling

The Division of Marine Fisheries has adopted a new measure to prevent unlawful “stockpiling” of striped bass on closed commercial fishing days in the striped bass fishery. Beginning on June 20 through the end of the commercial season, commercial striped bass fishermen recreationally fishing on a closed commercial fishing day must remove the entire right pectoral fin of any striped bass 34” or greater that they retain. To aid in enforcement, this rule also applies to any person fishing aboard a vessel that is either named on a commercial striped bass permit endorsement or carrying the holder of a commercial striped bass permit endorsement. Concurrently, dealers are prohibited from purchasing and selling any striped bass that has had its right pectoral fin removed.

Commercial striped bass regulations establish a June 23 seasonal start date and open days of Monday and Thursday; for 2015, this means the commercial fishery begins on Thursday, June 25. Accordingly, the requirement to remove the right pectoral fin is active this year from June 20 - 24, followed by every Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday until the season closes (quota dependent). The harvester must remove the right pectoral fin immediately after measuring and retaining a fish 34” or greater. The entire fin must be completely removed (see picture). A sharp knife is the suggested tool. A [video](#) has been posted to the Division’s YouTube channel to demonstrate a fin removal compliant with the rule.

“Stockpiling” refers to harvesting fish on a closed commercial fishing day for sale on a subsequent open commercial day. While already unlawful, this activity is difficult to detect and prevent because no misconduct is committed until well-after the catching and landing of the fish (assuming the recreational rules are followed) and the challenge of irrefutably establishing the harvest date of fish brought to market. The marking of fish by fin removal provides law enforcement officers and seafood dealers the ability to identify a recreationally harvested striped bass and keep it out of commerce. The marking requirement should not be confused with a conservation measure (akin to v-notching of lobsters); fish maimed in this manner will have a greatly reduced chance of survival if released.

For more information, refer to our [website](#), review the striped bass [regulations](#), or call us at 617-626-1520. A reminder of all commercial striped bass regulations will be provided by notice closer to the season’s onset.



Photograph taken at a Massachusetts wholesale dealer facility for demonstration purposes only.