

WAC 220-340-420 Commercial crab fishery—Unlawful acts. (1)

Crab size and sex restrictions. It is unlawful for any person acting for commercial purposes to take, possess, deliver, or otherwise control:

(a) Any female Dungeness crab; or

(b) Any male Dungeness crab measuring less than 6-1/4 inches, caliper measurement, at the widest part of the shell immediately in front of the points (tips).

(2) Violation of subsection (1) of this section is a gross misdemeanor or class C felony depending on the value of fish or shellfish taken, possessed, or delivered, punishable under RCW 77.15.550 (1)(c).

(3) **Incidental catch may not be retained.** It is unlawful to retain salmon, food fish, or any shellfish other than octopus that is taken incidental to any commercial crab fishing.

(4) **Net fishing boats must not have crab on board.** It is unlawful for any person to possess any crab on board a vessel geared or equipped with commercial net fishing gear while fishing with the net gear for commercial purposes or while commercial quantities of food fish or shellfish are on board. Violation of this subsection is a gross misdemeanor or class C felony punishable under RCW 77.15.550(1), depending on the quantity of crab taken or possessed.

(5) **Area must be open to commercial crabbing.** It is unlawful for any person to set, maintain, or operate any baited or unbaited shellfish pots for taking crab for commercial purposes in any area or time that is not open for commercial crabbing by rule of the department, except when acting lawfully under the authority of a valid gear recovery permit as provided in WAC 220-340-450.

(6) Violation of subsection (5) of this section is a gross misdemeanor or class C felony punishable under RCW 77.15.550, or a gross misdemeanor punishable under RCW 77.15.522 depending on the circumstances of the violation.

(7) **When it is unlawful to buy or land crab from the ocean without a crab vessel inspection.** It is unlawful for any fisher or wholesale fish buyer to land or purchase Dungeness crab taken from Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay, the Columbia River, or Washington coastal or adjacent waters of the Pacific Ocean from any vessel that has not been issued a Washington crab vessel inspection certificate during the first 30 days following the opening of a coastal crab season.

(a) Authorized department personnel will perform inspections for Washington crab vessel inspection certificates no earlier than 12 hours prior to the opening of the coastal crab season and during the following 30-day period.

(b) A Washington crab vessel inspection certificate may be issued to vessels made available for inspection at a Washington coastal port that:

(i) Are properly licensed commercial crab fishing; and

(ii) Contain no Dungeness crab on board the vessel.

(8) Violation of subsection (7) of this section is a gross misdemeanor, punishable under RCW 77.15.550 (1)(a) Violation of commercial fishing area or time—Penalty.

(9) **Barging of crab pots by undesignated vessels.** It is unlawful for a vessel not designated on a Dungeness crab coastal or Puget Sound fishery license to deploy crab pot gear except under the following conditions:

(a) **Coastal**

(i) The vessel deploys pot gear only during the 73-hour period immediately preceding the season opening date and during the 48-hour period immediately following the season opening date;

(ii) The undesignated vessel carries no more than 250 crab pots at any one time; and

(iii) The primary or alternate operator of the crab pot gear named on the license associated with the gear is on board the undesignated vessel while the gear is being deployed.

(b) **Puget Sound**

(i) The vessel deploys pot gear only during the 48-hour period immediately following the initial season opening date and time;

(ii) The primary or alternate operator designated on the license associated with the barged gear is on board the nondesignated vessel ("barge" vessel) while the gear is being deployed; and

(iii) The Puget Sound commercial crab license holder who owns the gear intended for barging has provided notice to the department via email at crab.report@dfw.wa.gov at least 24 hours in advance of the fishery opening date. Notice must include the following information:

(A) Name and license number(s) of the owner of the gear being barged;

(B) Name of the designated primary operator, if different from the licensed owner;

(C) Name of the alternate operator, if used to deploy pots from a nondesignated vessel;

(D) Buoy brand number and number of pots to be deployed from a nondesignated vessel;

(E) Name and identification numbers (WN and/or Coast Guard) of the nondesignated vessel;

(F) Puget Sound Crab Management Region or set location.

(10) Violation of subsection (9) of this section is a gross misdemeanor or class C felony punishable under RCW 77.15.500 Commercial fishing without a license—Penalty, depending on the circumstances of the violation.

(11) **Storing crab prior to delivery to an original receiver, Puget Sound.** It is unlawful for a Puget Sound commercial crab license holder to store crab prior to delivery to an original receiver, except under the following conditions:

(a) It is unlawful to store crab for more than 10 days prior to delivery to an original receiver.

(b) All crab that have been removed from a vessel and are not immediately delivered to an original receiver must be stored in containers labeled with the following:

(i) Date of harvest;

(ii) An estimate of pounds of crab contained;

(iii) Either the Marine Fish-Shellfish (MFSF) Catch Reporting Area or the Crab Management Region from which the catch originated;

(iv) Containers used for storing crab removed from a vessel and not delivered to an original receiver by 5:00 p.m. of the day following the day of harvest must additionally be labeled with the commercial fish and shellfish transportation ticket number(s).

(c) Storage of crab is subject to the reporting requirements described in WAC 220-352-340.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04-055 [77.04.055], 77.12.045, and 77.12.047. WSR 22-08-048, § 220-340-420, filed 3/31/22, effective 5/1/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.020, 77.12.045, and

77.12.047. WSR 21-24-031 (Order 21-259), § 220-340-420, filed 11/22/21, effective 1/1/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.090, 77.04.130, 77.15.568, 77.08.010, 77.65.510, 77.65.515, and 77.65.520. WSR 17-22-100, § 220-340-420, filed 10/30/17, effective 1/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), amended and recodified as § 220-340-420, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.055, 77.12.045, and 77.12.047. WSR 12-23-016 (Order 12-267), § 220-52-040, filed 11/9/12, effective 12/10/12. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047 and 77.04.020. WSR 09-18-075 (Order 09-183), § 220-52-040, filed 8/31/09, effective 10/1/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. WSR 07-23-090 (Order 07-285), § 220-52-040, filed 11/20/07, effective 12/21/07; WSR 05-21-068 (Order 05-246), § 220-52-040, filed 10/14/05, effective 11/14/05; WSR 01-20-066 (Order 01-219), § 220-52-040, filed 9/28/01, effective 10/29/01; WSR 01-18-005 (Order 01-180), § 220-52-040, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01; WSR 01-11-009 (Order 01-74), § 220-52-040, filed 5/3/01, effective 6/3/01; WSR 00-18-005 (Order 00-164), § 220-52-040, filed 8/23/00, effective 9/23/00. Statutory Authority: RCW 75.08.080. WSR 98-19-012 (Order 98-185), § 220-52-040, filed 9/4/98, effective 10/5/98; WSR 98-05-043, § 220-52-040, filed 2/11/98, effective 3/14/98; WSR 97-08-052 (Order 97-55), § 220-52-040, filed 3/31/97, effective 5/1/97; WSR 94-12-009 (Order 94-23), § 220-52-040, filed 5/19/94, effective 6/19/94; WSR 91-10-024 (Order 91-22), § 220-52-040, filed 4/23/91, effective 5/24/91; WSR 85-01-010 (Order 84-214), § 220-52-040, filed 12/7/84; WSR 84-08-014 (Order 84-24), § 220-52-040, filed 3/27/84; WSR 83-01-026 (Order 82-221), § 220-52-040, filed 12/8/82; WSR 80-13-064 (Order 80-123), § 220-52-040, filed 9/17/80; WSR 79-02-053 (Order 79-6), § 220-52-040, filed 1/30/79; Order 77-145, § 220-52-040, filed 12/13/77; Order 76-152, § 220-52-040, filed 12/17/76; Order 76-26, § 220-52-040, filed 1:45 p.m., 4/20/76; Order 1045, § 220-52-040, filed 3/8/73; Order 807, § 220-52-040, filed 1/2/69, effective 2/1/69; subsections 1, 5, 6, from Orders 409 and 256, filed 3/1/60; subsection 2 from Orders 500 and 256, filed 3/1/60; subsection 3 from Order 528, filed 6/1/61; Order 525, filed 5/3/61; Order 507, filed 4/8/60; Orders 409 and 256, filed 3/1/60; subsection 4 from Order 528, filed 6/1/61; Order 525, filed 5/3/61; Orders 409 and 256, filed 3/1/60; subsection 7 from Orders 414 and 256, filed 3/1/60; subsection 8 from Orders 410 and 256, filed 3/1/60; subsection 9 from Order 409, filed 9/14/56.]