

WAC 220-370-120 Marine finfish aquaculture—Escape reporting and recapture plan required. (1) It is the responsibility of aquatic farmers to report an escape of marine finfish and to attempt to recapture escaped fish. Escaped marine finfish will be treated by the department the same as feral fish, and the department may augment capture and removal of such fish by scheduling recreational or commercial fisheries.

(2) An escape reporting and recapture plan is required with each application for a marine finfish aquaculture permit and approval by the department of the fish escape reporting and recapture plan is required before issuance of a marine finfish aquaculture permit.

(3) The escape reporting and recapture plan must include:

(a) Reporting procedure. Procedures for determining what constitutes a reportable fish escape. An emergency contact list in the event of a reportable fish escape from the permittee's net-pens, including local government, the department and the Washington department of ecology.

(b) Procedures requiring the permittee to report any reportable fish escape, within twenty-four hours of the permittee having knowledge of that escape, to local government, the department, and ecology. The report shall include the location, number, age class, disease and medication history, and cause of escape.

(c) Procedures to recapture escaped fish. Each marine aquatic farming location shall have a procedure for attempting recapture of escaped fish. The plan may include the use of facilities' skiffs, seines or nets and/or tribal and commercial fishers acting under contract with the aquaculture facility. For all reportable escapes, the permittee shall also submit a follow-up report describing all fish recovery efforts initiated in response to the escape, and effectiveness of the recovery efforts.

(d) Emergency procedures that will be taken to minimize the number of escaped fish.

(e) In the event the escaped fish were being treated with antibiotics or other drugs subject to USFDA withdrawal requirements and the withdrawal periods had not expired at the time of the escape, the permittee shall also include this information in the report required by (b) of this subsection, and shall provide a copy of the report to the Washington state department of health.

(4) For the purpose of meeting the requirements of this section, plans and manuals required by the department of ecology through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process may be submitted for approval.

(5) The permittee shall submit, by the last day in February, an annual fish escape report to the department, covering the previous calendar year. The report shall summarize, by month and pen site, the number, age class, disease and medication history, and cause of all fish escapes to waters of the state. The permittee shall summarize the actions taken over the previous year to prevent the escape of fish to state waters.

(6) Marine finfish aquaculture farmers are required to implement the provisions of their approved fish escape reporting and recapture plan. Failure to implement the provisions of an approved escape reporting and recapture plan may result in invalidation of the marine finfish aquaculture permit. A notice of failure to comply with the fish escape recapture and reporting requirements will be given prior to invalidation of the permit, and the aquaculture farmer will have

not less than seven nor more than ninety days to correct the conditions or status that caused the notice to be given. If the marine finfish aquaculture permit is invalidated, any transportation of finfish shall be treated as a violation of RCW 77.15.290.

[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), recodified as § 220-370-120, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047. WSR 03-02-047 (Order 02-309), § 220-76-120, filed 12/24/02, effective 7/1/03.]