New Recreational Saltwater License for 2011 season!!!

Hi all, for those of you who are recreational anglers in the state of MA, Both boat and shore fisherman. This year there is a new Saltwater License you are required to have to be able to saltwater fish in the state of MA. You can apply for it online at http://Mass.Gov/MassFishHunt and you need to have the license with you while you are fishing. This License is $10 and You can Print it off from the MA website above.

NOTE: This License is NOT required if you are on a Charter Boat. ALL charter boat operators must have their own permit which covers all indiviuals on Their vessel. Check out the Mass.Gov website listed above for more info!!!

Purchase a Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit

Purchase or renew Massachusetts Recreational Saltwater Fishing & Recreational Lobster Permits using MassFishHunt via the link below:Click Here to Get Permit **Note: MA Anglers only need the MA Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit. Anglers are no longer required to register with the National Registry as in 2010. Please see FAQ belowFor assistance with rules and regulations pertaining to recreational lobstering or saltwater fishing, please visit our Recreational Regulations page, email us, or call:
Boston: 617-626-1520
Gloucester: 978-282-0308 ext. 150
New Bedford: 508-990-2860 ext. 150What you'll need to buy permit online:
- Date of Birth
- A primary Phone Number where the permit holder can be reached
- VISA, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express Credit Card
- A Printer to print your permit
- An email address is highly recommended but not required

Paper Applications:
Download a paper Recreational Saltwater Fishing application by clicking here
Download a paper Recreational Lobster application by clicking here
Download a paper Recreational For-Hire Vessel application by clicking here
- Paper Applications can be mailed in with a check (if applicable) or brought to one of our permitting facilities. Please note that our Gloucester and New Bedford offices only accept checks or money orders. Our Boston office accepts checks, money orders, or cash (exact change only).
Frequently Asked Questions

Who needs the MA Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit?
In order to fish recreationally for finfish in Massachusetts marine waters, including up to the first dam in rivers and streams that flow to the ocean (click here for exceptions to the rule), saltwater fishermen must have:
- A MA Recreational Saltwater Fishing permit, or
- A recreational saltwater fishing permit from a state that has a reciprocity agreement with Massachusetts. As of February 17, 2011, Massachusetts has reciprocity agreements with:
  New Hampshire: MA to NH NH to MA
  Rhode Island: MA to RI RI to MA
  Connecticut: MA to CT CT to MA

What is the cost of the MA Permit?
The annual cost for both residents and non-residents is $10.Who does not need a permit?
No permit is required for:
- Fishermen who are under 16 years of age
- Fishermen fishing on permitted for-hire vessels
- Fishermen who regardless of their age, otherwise meet the definition of a disabled person in M.G.L. c. 19C

What about people 60 and older?
People 60 and older must obtain a permit but the permit is free for these individuals (although a small fee will be charged by the vendor to process the permit through the internet).

Do all recreational fishermen on a private vessel need to purchase a recreational fishing permit or is there a boat permit available?
All recreational fishermen ages 16 to 59 must purchase an individual permit and those fishermen age 60 or over must obtain a free permit if not fishing aboard a permitted for-hire vessel on a charter or headboat trip. There is no permit available for a private fishing vessel or any type of family permit that covers multiple family members.

Does my for-hire permit allow me to fish recreationally in salt water when not involved in for-hire activity?

Yes, it does cover you as an individual angler provided that the for-hire permit is issued in your name. You must have the for-hire permit in your possession.

If I have a Highly Migratory Species permit am I exempt from the MA permit?
If you are finfishing exclusively in federal waters and possess an HMS permit, you do not need a MA permit as long as you do not land any fish in Massachusetts. If you retain fish and bring them back into MA state waters, or you fish in state waters, then you will need the MA permit.

Do I need to sign up for the National Saltwater Angler Registry as I did in 2010 (and pay an additional $15 starting in 2011)?
No, the Federal permit no longer covers you to fish in Massachusetts waters. Your MA permit allows you to fish in MA and Federal waters as well as land your fish in Massachusetts. However, if you fish for tuna, billfish, swordfish, and/or sharks you will need a Highly Migratory Species permit from the Federal government.

When does the permit expire?
Massachusetts permits expire each year on December 31. All permits must be renewed annually.

Is a saltwater/freshwater fishing combination permit available?
No, not at this time, but you can get all of your permits at the same website: MassFishHunt

How will the permit fee revenues be used?
All permit fees will be deposited in a dedicated account, managed by DMF. An advisory panel will assist DMF in developing programs for the expenditure of all collected funds. In accordance with the state law governing the permit program, the permit fee revenues can only be used to administer the permit program, improve the management of MA's marine recreational fisheries, particularly with regard to developing more accurate assessments of recreational catch and effort, and enhance recreational fishing access opportunities in the state. The permit fee revenues cannot be used for any purpose that is unrelated to marine recreational fishing in MA.

Do I still need to follow all applicable rules and regulations governing marine recreational fishing?
Yes, the permit simply enables you to fish legally, in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations. Recreational regulations can be found here.

Where can I get a copy of the 2011 Massachusetts Saltwater Recreational Fishing Guide?
The guide is available on our website by clicking here. If you would like a hard copy of the guide, please contact or stop by one of our offices.

Do I need the MA Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit to go recreational shellfishing or recreational lobstering?
No. Recreational shellfishing is allowed in designated clean areas and regulated by the individual cities and towns. Contact your town Department of Natural Resources for local regulations and permit acquisition. Recreational lobstering requires a separate permit that can be obtained through the same website: MassFishHunt

Where can I find the recreational lobster and crabbing rules?
The Recreational Lobster and Crabbing Guide (1.2 Mb) conatains the recreational lobster and crabbing rules as well as other useful information. Customer Service
- For assistance using MassFishHunt or questions about payments, please call:
1-888-773-8450 or email email info
Help Desk Hours:
Mon - Fri: 8am - 7pm (EST)
Sat: 8am - 5pm (EST)
Sun: Closed
- For assistance with rules and regulations pertaining to recreational lobstering or saltwater fishing, please visit our Recreational Regulations page, email us, or call:
Boston: 617-626-1520
Gloucester: 978-282-0308 ext. 150
New Bedford: 508-990-2860 ext. 150
- Please note that your MassFishHunt transactions will be indicated on your credit card statement as follows:
ACT*MADFG MassFishHunt 615-263-4257