



# Town of Provincetown

## Recreational Shellfishing Regulations

Recreational shellfish regulations are designed to both promote and protect shellfish supplies for recreational harvesters, giving them the opportunity to enjoy this natural resource. They will tell you how, when, what to harvest, and how many to keep. Shellfish areas are rotated to allow juveniles time to develop into legal size. Provincetown's rotating recreational shellfishing areas are east and west of the West End breakwater, the East End of town, and Hatches Harbor. Recreational harvesters are not allowed to rake in the designated shellfish aquaculture areas.

All persons harvesting shellfish are asked to re-bury undersize shellfish to protect them from both the weather and predators, such as crabs and seagulls. It takes about two years for a soft-shelled clam to reach legal size and three or four years for a quahog to reach legal size.

We ask that dog owners keep their pets on leashes, as dogs can have an effect on the shellfish such as: Fecal materials contain high levels of fecal coliform bacteria. Federal water testing procedures test for this bacteria. Results of these tests may result in the closure of areas for shellfish harvesting or in extreme cases, swimming. Dogs can inadvertently tear shellfish aquaculture netting. Unplanned encounters with fecal material deposits on the beach can be very unpleasant and unsanitary. We expect dog owners to be prepared to scoop the poop.

The town's Shellfish Constable is on the flats both, to assist shellfishers, and to enforce these regulations.

1. The Provincetown tidelands shall be closed to the taking of quahogs, soft-shelled clams, oysters, and mussels except in areas designated by the Board of Selectman under the conditions herein imposed.
2. The Town Clerk to any legal resident or real estate taxpayer upon receipt of a \$15 annual fee shall issue a family permit for the non-commercial recreational taking of shellfish. Residents or taxpayers shall be issued a free shellfish permit at age 65 or older. The fee for a non-resident shellfish permit is \$50.
3. Quahogs must be one-inch thick, soft-shelled clams must be two inches long, and oysters must be three inches long. Possession of a gauge is required or you will be denied access to the tidal flats.
4. The weekly limit for recreational permit holders for any combination of quahogs, soft shelled clams, and oysters is either one level 10 quart pail or a peck shellfish basket. No other containers are allowed on the tidal flats. No limit on mussels. Sea clam limit is one bushel per week. If bay scallops are abundant the Shellfish Constable will post their taking and the recreational limit shall be two pecks per week.
5. Certain days of the week may be specified for the recreational taking of quahogs and soft-shelled clams. This information will be posted in the Town Clerk's office. Harvesting is limited to daylight hours, sunrise to sunset.
6. No permit required for sea worms, periwinkles, and mussels which may be taken year round.
7. Upon leaving the flats, all recreational shellfish harvesters will report to the Shellfish Constable who maintains a record of the town's yearly harvest.
8. Violations of the above regulations shall be punishable by a fine of no less than \$50 and no more than \$300 and/or revocation of license or permit.

Revised by the Board of Selectmen on March 29, 2004