



Town Recreational Shellfish Crier
June 3, 2023

1. June 1 Changes

- From June 1 through September 30, the only place that recreational shellfishing can take place is at the Indian Neck Recreational Only Area from the jetty (the big breakwater with the beacon) south to the first groin (mini-breakwater) of Burton Baker Beach, just past the rock.
- You can shellfish on Wednesdays and Sundays only.
- Limit is one 10-quart basket a week. The new week begins on Sundays.
- Burton Baker Beach is still closed. See map of closed area [here](#).
- The area by the jetty will open tomorrow, Sunday, June 4. The Shellfish Department put oysters from our farm there, and last year's quahogs (170,000!) from the relay have been tested and are clean and ready for harvest.
- Tomorrow's low tides are at 6:29 a.m. and it's a -0.5, and 6:37 p.m. and it's a 0.7.

2. Regulation Reminders

- Taking of Seed Prohibited: oysters must measure at least three inches long, quahogs must measure at least one inch across the hinge width and soft shell clams (steamers) must measure at least two inches long.
 - By allowing shellfish to mature to legal sizes, you can reasonably assume that the animal has spawned, thus contributing to future populations of wild shellfish in Wellfleet Harbor.
 - Once shellfish is in your basket, it is considered your catch; therefore, you should measure and cull as you go before placing it in your basket.
 - The first time we find seed, we will remove it and mark your permit with an "S." The next time, you will receive a \$50 citation.
 - We review all prior year infractions and carry them forward year-to-year.
- One permit, one basket, one rake: The Town of Wellfleet does not issue family permits. Each permit entitles the named permit holder to harvest shellfish. The permit is non-transferable.
- Please familiarize yourself with our regulations [here](#). Section 5 is specific for recreational shellfishing.
- Click [here](#) for our handout with quick facts and a measuring guide. The high points are also printed on the permit you receive each year. We are always available to answer your questions on the flats or on the phone, as well.
- We thank you in advance for your help in ensuring a prolific future for our wild shellfish in Wellfleet Harbor. We are undertaking many propagation efforts to supplement Mother Nature so that there are plenty of legal shellfish for you all to harvest. It takes a village!

3. Harvest Oysters Safely between May 19 and October 19

“Oysters can make for a delicious meal, but they can also carry harmful bacteria. *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (Vp.) is a bacteria found in oysters that increases health risks. These bacteria can cause stomach pain or even be lethal. It is most common during warm summer months when the bacteria can multiply.” ~[courtesy Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries](#) (MADMF). MADMF has implemented a control plan to reduce the probability of bacteria growth in harvested oysters. It runs from May 19 to Oct. 19 each year.

We suggest bringing a cooler with ample ice to the beach with you when you are harvesting oysters between May and October. The important thing is to get them on ice or into your fridge as soon as possible, but within two hours of when the tide has receded and left them uncovered. Once the oysters are exposed, they close up and stop filter feeding. This is when the bacteria can multiply. We suggest getting to the tide an hour before low water and following the tide out as it exposes the oysters. Then get them into your cooler and back home to your fridge immediately. Later that day.....Buon Appetito!

4. The Wellfleet Shellfish Department is Hiring

The Shellfish Department is hiring a seasonal, part-time Deputy Shellfish Constable for the recreational shellfishery. See announcement [here](#) (scroll down to seasonal positions) and job description [here](#) (it may automatically download a PDF). Please share widely. We will soon be posting a year-round job, as well. Stay tuned. Both positions will also assist Johnny Clam with propagation activities and Nancy with administrative tasks.

Contact Nancy at nancy.civetta@wellfleet-ma.gov or 508-349-0325 with ideas on how the Shellfish Department can help or improve shellfishing. Thank you!

Nancy Civetta
Shellfish Constable

John Mankevetch
Assistant Shellfish Constable

Chris Manulla
Deputy Shellfish Constable