



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
FISH PROGRAM, FISH MANAGEMENT DIVISION, PUGET SOUND SHELLFISH UNIT

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State-licensed shellfish buyers and dealers:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is charged with protecting and perpetuating the fish and wildlife resources of the state. Among our responsibilities is managing risks associated with introduction or spread of shellfish and seaweed diseases and pests in our state waters. Pests and diseases can be extremely damaging to Washington's shellfish resources and marine environments. The movement of live shellfish is one pathway through which shellfish pathogens or pests can be introduced or spread. Consequently, WDFW regulations require a Shellfish Transfer¹ or Import² Permit for movement of shellfish into or around state waters.

The movement of shellfish into wet storage and live holding facilities that are within or connected to state waters (for example through water discharge), require a permit; including shellfish harvested from Washington state waters. Facilities such as on-beach wet storage sites, flow-through tanks, and in-water sink floats all require approval and permitting from WDFW (not just from the Department of Health). Additionally, import of shellfish not intended for immediate human consumption from out-of-state may require a permit even if the receiving facility is closed or recirculating. Among WDFW's current concerns are increased international trade of live shellfish that may result in the accidental import of exotic pathogens, and the expanding range of invasive European green crab.

WDFW reminds all seafood buyers and dealers that the operation of wet storage sites or live holding facilities without permits and approval from WDFW is unlawful. It is especially critical that no live, imported shellfish are placed into facilities or sites connected to state waters without review and authorization from WDFW.

Please help protect Washington waters from harmful pests and pathogens. For more information on WDFW permitting, shellfish disease and pest issues, and other requirements visit <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/fishing/shellfish-import-transfer>. You may contact us at shellfishpermits@dfw.wa.gov with questions or permit applications.

Additional information on how you can safeguard our state's shellfish resources and marine environments is available on our public outreach campaign website: <https://invasivespecies.wa.gov/campaigns/safeguard-our-shellfish/>.

Sincerely,

Nam Siu
Shellfish Permitting Coordinator
Shellfish and Seaweed Health and Biosecurity Unit
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

¹WAC 220-340-150

²WAC 220-340-050