

License To Fish. It's the Law!



Starting Jan. 1, 2007, a Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) is required for anyone wanting to fish recreationally in North Carolina's coastal waters. The N.C. General Assembly passed legislation in 2004 to create a saltwater license, and Governor Mike Easley signed it into law in 2005.

The revenues generated from the sales of CRFLs will be used to conserve and enhance North Carolina's marine fisheries resources.

Below are some frequently asked questions the public has posed to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and the Division of Marine Fisheries.

1) Where can I fish with a CRFL? To fish recreationally in coastal waters managed by the Division of Marine Fisheries, you need a CRFL.

To fish in public, inland fishing waters, you need an inland fishing license, available from the Wildlife Resources Commission.

To fish in the joint waters managed by both the Division of Marine Fisheries and the Wildlife Resources Commission, you need a CRFL **or** an inland fishing license.

The boundaries between coastal, inland and joint fishing waters are marked with metal signs posted adjacent to the affected waters.

2) Has the cost of an annual, inland fishing license increase? No. The cost of an inland fishing license remains the same: \$15 for residents; \$30 for non-residents.

3) I live in a coastal county, but I have a private pond on my property that I have stocked. Do I need a CRFL to fish in my pond? No. Private ponds are exempt from any licensing requirements.

Know Your Waters!

If you have any questions about the designation of specific waters, call:

Division of Marine Fisheries (800) 682-2632
Wildlife Resources Commission (919) 707-0030

4) Before Jan. 1, 2007, North Carolinians could fish in inland waters in their county of residence without a license as long as they were fishing with natural bait. Does this natural-bait exemption extend to the CRFL? No. The new legislation repeals the natural-bait exemption for fishing in public, inland waters.

As of Jan. 1, 2007, any person 16 and older fishing in North Carolina public waters (excluding ponds) must have a fishing license. People who receive Food Stamps, Medicaid or Work First Family Assistance may receive a subsistence waiver through their county Department of Social Services.

This annual waiver allows the holder to fish recreationally with hook-and-line in inland waters (with the exception of Public Mountain Trout Waters), joint and coastal waters.

5) Who has to purchase a CRFL? Any person 16 years or older who wants to fish recreationally in any water designated as coastal and joint waters of North Carolina must purchase a CRFL. The exceptions are:

a. An individual who holds a resident/non-resident lifetime infant, youth, adult, over 70, disabled sportsman, lifetime comprehensive fishing license, hunting/fishing basic disabled veteran or hunting/fishing basic total disabled license issued by the Wildlife Resources Commission before Jan. 1, 2006.

b. An individual who holds a lifetime legally blind or adult care home license, regardless of when it was issued.

6) What types of individual CRFLs are available and what do they cost? Several individual CRFLs are available to accommodate a variety of needs and situations. They include short-term licenses; annual licenses; lifetime licenses, which are valid for the lifetime of the holder; and unified licenses, which include hunting/statewide fishing privileges.

The most common CRFLs are:

Annual Resident – \$15
Annual Non-Resident – \$30
10-day Resident – \$5
10-day Non-Resident – \$10
Annual Inland/CRFL - \$35
Annual Unified – \$55
Various Lifetime – fees vary
Various Lifetime Unified – fees vary

Visit www.ncwildlife.org for a complete list of licenses and pricing.

7) Where can I purchase a CRFL? A CRFL can be purchased four ways:

- a. Go to the Wildlife Resources Commission's Web site, www.ncwildlife.org.
- b. Visit a Wildlife Resources Commission Wildlife Service Agent. Most are located in bait-and-tackle shops, hunting and sporting good stores and larger chain stores.
- c. Call toll-free, 1(888) 248-6834. Hours of operation: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Mon. – Fri.
- d. Visit one of six Division of Marine Fisheries offices located on the coast. For locations, go to the Division of Marine Fisheries Web site, www.ncfisheries.net.

8) What types of blanket CRFLs are available? Who is eligible to purchase one? Two types of blanket CRFLs are available only through Division of Marine Fisheries offices:

- a. For-Hire Blanket — a person who operates a “for-hire boat” (*i.e.*, charter boat) may purchase a CRFL that allows all individuals on the for-hire boat who do not hold a CRFL to fish in coastal fishing waters that are not joint fishing waters. This license does not authorize individuals to fish recreationally in inland or joint fishing waters.
- b. Ocean Fishing Pier Blanket — a person who operates or owns an ocean fishing pier

and who charges a fee to allow a person to fish recreationally from the pier may purchase an Ocean Fishing Pier Blanket CRFL.

This license allows all individuals who do not hold an individual CRFL to engage in recreational fishing in coastal waters while on the pier.

9) Is there a CRFL boat license I can buy so my guests do not have to worry about purchasing an individual CRFL? No. The intent of the legislation creating the CRFL was to license the individual so the state could assess more accurately the impact of recreational fishing.

10) Do I need a CRFL to harvest crabs, mussels, clams, lobsters, shrimp and other shellfish? No, the license is only required for the recreational harvest of finfish.

11) Do anglers who use gigs and cast-nets to harvest finfish recreationally need to have this license? Yes.

12) Do I need a CRFL license to fish from a privately owned pier? Yes.

13) Can I sell my catch if I have a CRFL? No. Seafood harvested under the license is for personal consumption and cannot be sold.

For more information, contact:



N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission
www.ncwildlife.org
(919) 707-0030



Division of Marine Fisheries
www.ncfisheries.net
(252) 726-7021
(800) 682-2632

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N.C. Coastal Recreational Fishing License



**Frequently Asked Questions
About North Carolina's Coastal
Recreational Fishing License**