

Summary of Emergency Rules

Personal Bait Use Restrictions

- The personal harvest and use of wild fish as bait is prohibited, with the exception of yellow perch and rainbow smelt, which only can be used on the waters from which they were caught.
- A person may buy, possess, transport, and use only approved species of baitfish.
- Anyone purchasing baitfish must keep and show upon request a receipt for purchases of baitfish from a state-approved commercial bait dealer. Purchased baitfish can only be used on a single waterbody, and cannot be transported to other waters for use. Receipts are valid for 48 hours from time and date of sale. After this, the baitfish cannot be used and must be destroyed.
- Anglers must not depart waters of the state with baitfish in their possession.

Commercial Bait Dealers - Permitted Activities and Restrictions

- Anyone who sells baitfish is required to obtain a Commercial Bait Dealers Permit from the Department.
- Commercial Bait Dealers must declare in their permit application if they will be a Lake Champlain Zone bait dealer or an Interior Zone bait dealer.
- Commercial Bait Dealers in the Lake Champlain Zone must be located on or have facilities that discharge directly to Lake Champlain [as defined by the Lake Champlain Boundaries regulation](#).
- Commercial Bait Dealers located in the Lake Champlain Zone can only harvest wild baitfish in that Zone and cannot harvest bait elsewhere in the state. Wild baitfish harvested in the Lake Champlain Zone may not be transferred to or held in facilities outside of the Zone.
- Commercial Bait Dealers located in the Lake Champlain Zone can only sell baitfish, wild or cultured, for use within the Lake Champlain Zone. Commercial Bait Dealers in the Lake Champlain Zone must indicate on all sales receipts that the baitfish sold are only permitted for use within the Lake Champlain Zone.
- Commercial Bait Dealers located in the Interior Zone are prohibited from selling wild harvested baitfish. Baitfish sold in the Interior Zone must originate from a fish hatchery approved by the Department.
- Baitfish sold by Interior Zone Commercial Bait Dealers may be used in both the Interior Zone and the Lake Champlain Zone.
- All Commercial Bait Dealers may only sell approved species of baitfish.
- All Commercial Bait Dealers must provide customers a sales receipt containing the following information:
 - 1) A unique receipt identification number,
 - 2) The name, telephone number, and Baitfish Zone of the bait dealer,
 - 3) time and date of sale,
 - 4) species purchased,
 - 5) quantity purchased,
 - 6) waterbody (limited to one) on which the bait will be used,
 - 7) signature of purchaser.
- Receipt forms will be provided to Commercial Bait Dealers by the Department.
- Commercial Bait Dealers must keep records of each individual lot of baitfish introduced into their shop for sale. The records must include the name of seller, address and telephone number of seller, date received, species identification, and number purchased. The permit holder shall retain the original receipts for at least one year after the date of sale. Receipts must be shown upon request.

Disposal of water.

- Upon being removed from the water, all watercraft, watercraft trailers, boating or fishing equipment, including water in any bilge, ballast tank, bait bucket, and live well must be immediately emptied and drained of all water. This does not apply to tanks or containers of potable drinking water or other beverages meant for human consumption.