



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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TRAWL VESSELS

New On-Reel Trawl Gear Stowage Method

Effective Date: September 4, 2014

New on-reel trawl gear stowage requirements have been implemented for when vessels are transiting closed areas or fishing in areas with mesh size restrictions. A highly visible orange or yellow mesh material can now be used as a cover for the trawl net as an alternative to the current requirement to use a tarp or similar canvas material. The material must be a highly visible orange or yellow mesh material that is not capable of catching fish or being utilized as fishing gear. An example of highly visible orange or yellow mesh includes but is not limited to the orange fence material commonly used to enclose construction sites.

In addition, the requirement to remove the towing wires from the doors when stowing gear is also removed from all on-reel trawl gear stowage methods. It has been brought to our attention that this requirement can be dangerous and is not needed to conduct closed area enforcement. As such, this requirement is removed for both this new method and the existing tarp method.

More details on gear stowage methods are available in our Gear Stowage Information Sheet available online at www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/info.html. You can also contact us at the number above to request a copy.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to stow my net on the reel?	No. You may also stow it on the deck or below deck in accordance with the regulations.
When do I have to stow my gear?	It varies depending on the situation, but typically only when transiting closed areas or when fishing in an area with a mesh size restriction. If you are unsure of your specific gear stowage requirements, please call us at (978) 281-9315.
Where can I get the new material?	You will be responsible for obtaining your own material. It can either be purchased or you can make it yourself as long as it complies with the regulations. If you have questions on whether your material meets the requirements, please contact us at (978) 281-9315.
Can I still use the tarp material that I've always used?	Yes. You may continue to use the existing methods, or you may opt for the new mesh covering.

For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region.