



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Date Issued: 9/22/2015

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Permit Holders

Specification of 2016 Quotas and Surfclam Minimum Size Suspension

Effective Date: January 1, 2016

For fishing year 2016 (January 1–December 31, 2016), the quota will remain 3.4 million bushels for surfclams, 5.3 million bushels for ocean quahogs, and 100,000 Maine bushels for Maine ocean quahogs. These quotas are unchanged from fishing year 2015. Also, the minimum size limit for surfclams is again being suspended for the 2016 fishing year.

We remind surfclam and ocean quahog fishermen that for their safety, it is important to stay informed of how to identify and react to discarded military munitions encountered while fishing. Please visit www.denix.osd.mil/uxo for more information or contact us at the number below for a pamphlet of information on military munitions.

<i>Frequently Asked Questions:</i>	
Why does it seem like the surfclam minimum size limit is suspended every year?	We have the authority to suspend the minimum size limit when our data show that most surfclams are larger than the minimum size of 4.75 inches. This is often the case, and we want to eliminate the burden of having a minimum size limit in place if it is not necessary, as allowed by the regulations.
How will I know what the quota is for future years and whether the surfclam size limit has been suspended again?	These decisions are made around the same time each year, generally in the fall, before the start of a new fishing year. We will continue to let you know through letters such as this. In addition, you can visit our website or call the number below.

Please visit www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/clam/ for more information on this fishery. If you have any questions, please contact Sustainable Fisheries at 978-281-9315.

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.