



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

NOAA Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

For Information Contact:
Sustainable Fisheries Division
(978) 281 – 9315

www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/
Date Issued: 7/2/2018

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Individual Transferable Quota Fishery 2018 Cost Recovery Cage Tag Fees

We are announcing the 2018 cost recovery fees for cage tags used in the Atlantic surfclam and ocean quahog individual transferable quota (ITQ) program. These fees are used to recover costs associated with the operation of the 2017 ITQ program. The fees apply to ITQ permit holders that receive an initial allocation of cage tags each year (i.e., quota share). The initial quota shareholder who first receives the allocation of cage tags will be responsible for the fee even for tags that are leased, sold, or otherwise used by someone else. Cost recovery bills based on these cage tag fees will be sent in 2019 based on the number of cage tags used during the 2018 fishing year. Shareholders will have 30 days from the bill date to submit payment. Late payment may be subject to administrative fees and/or interest charges as required by Federal law.

We have calculated the fee for each cage tag based on the number of ITQ cage tags that were used to land surfclams or ocean quahogs during the 2017 fishing year, and the costs associated with operating the program in 2017. These fees are separate from, and in addition to, the price ITQ permit holders currently pay to the tag vendor to obtain cage tags each year.

2018 Cost Recovery Per-Cage Tag Fees	
Atlantic Surfclam	\$0.85
Ocean Quahog	\$0.25

<i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>	
Why are you collecting fees from this fishery?	The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires us to collect the “actual costs directly related to the management, data collection, and enforcement” of any limited access privilege program, such as the surfclam and ocean quahog ITQ.
Don’t we already pay a fee per cage tag?	The cost to purchase the physical tags from the vendor at the start of the year is separate and is not affected by this cost recovery fee.
How did you calculate these fees?	We divided the total recoverable cost of managing the fishery in 2017 by the total number of tags used in 2017. For Atlantic surfclams this was \$58,723 and 68,762 cage tags, and for ocean quahogs this was \$24,549 and 97,331 cage tags.
Why is the tag fees higher than last year?	The total costs of managing the surfclam and ocean quahog fisheries vary from year to year depending on the exact amount of staff time spent on specific management tasks that are considered eligible for cost recovery.

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.

Does the Magnuson-Stevens Act Limit these fees?	The Magnuson-Stevens Act limits cost recovery fees to no more than 3% of the ex-vessel value of the fishery. The recoverable costs in 2017 represent 0.1926% of the ex-vessel value of the surfclam fishery (\$30,483,788) and 0.1035% of the ex-vessel value of the ocean quahog fishery (\$23,724,873).
What if I have ITQ quota share for both surfclam and ocean quahog?	We treat the surfclam and ocean quahog ITQ fisheries separately for cost recovery. Each fishery has a different per-tag fee, and separate bills will be sent for each fishery.
What if you collect more or less money than you expected?	Depending on the number of cage tags that are used to land surfclams and ocean quahogs, we may collect more or less than the actual 2017 recoverable costs. In that case, the difference (positive or negative) will be attributed to the recoverable costs in the following year.
What if I sell my quota share?	If you were allocated surfclam or ocean quahog cage tags at the start of the 2018 fishing year, you are responsible for any cost recovery fee that results if those tags are used to land surfclams or ocean quahogs at any time during the year. This applies even if you lease the tags or permanently transfer your quota share allocation to someone else.
How do I pay my bill?	Instructions for payment will be included in the bill. All payments will be made through the Pay.gov website using either a credit card or the account number and routing number from a bank account.
Who can I speak with if I have questions?	For questions, please contact our Sustainable Fisheries Division at 978-281-9315.