

Can the salmon net area be changed once the vessel has been registered?

If the vessel has been registered for a salmon net area but has not yet fished in that registration area, a *Vessel License Change of Information* form must be submitted along with the current year vessel license receipt.

Once the vessel has fished in the initial area of salmon registration, it cannot be registered for another area unless there is an authorization from the Commissioner of Fish and Game, or his/her designee. Authorization may be allowed only if a vessel has been lost, destroyed or suffered extensive mechanical breakdown, or if the vessel operator has suffered a serious illness, injury or death.



Can sport fishing be done from commercially licensed vessels?

There may be restrictions and ADFG regulations should be consulted prior to participation. Vessels must be licensed with ADFG for guided sport fishing.

When does a vessel have to be registered for commercial trolling?

Commercial hand and power troll vessels must be registered for trolling prior to participating in the fishery. Once the vessel has been registered for commercial trolling, there may be restrictions on its use for sport fishing. Contact the ADFG Division of Sport Fish for further information.

To register for trolling, check the appropriate box on the vessel license application form and indicate the date you want your troll registration to be effective. This may be the current date if you intend to start

trolling immediately, or it may be later in the year if you only fish the summer season and intend to use the boat for sport fishing in the meantime.

Can foreign vessels be licensed in Alaska?

A vessel that is documented in a foreign country cannot be licensed to fish commercially in Alaskan waters, the Federal waters of the exclusive economic zone or to process fish, unless approved by the Governor. However, a 1989 opinion from the Attorney General's office determined that foreign vessels may be licensed to operate as tenders or packers, provided they take product on board only in established ports, harbors, roadsteads, and not at sea. Foreign vessels which are used in fisheries occurring outside Alaska waters, primarily in Canada, may obtain Alaska vessel licenses in order to deliver catch to processors in Alaska, but they must clear customs when entering Alaska waters. For more detailed information, contact the Commission. Foreign vessels under 5 net tons can be licensed to commercial fish in Alaska only if the vessel is registered under the laws of the State. A copy of the state registration and the net tonnage certificate must be submitted with the *Commercial Vessel License Application* form.

For information regarding foreign vessels over 5 net tons, contact the United States Coast Guard at 1-800-799-8362.



This summary information is presented as a courtesy by the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission but does not modify or replace the agency's statutory requirements in AS 16.43 or regulatory requirements in Chapter 5 of Title 20, Alaska Administrative Code.

Photos courtesy of the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute.

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Commercial Fishing Vessel Licenses



Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

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What vessels have to be licensed for commercial fishing?

Vessels used for commercial fishing or related activities must be licensed by the Commission. This includes fishing vessels, tender/packers, and processing and transporter vessels. Guided charter vessels must be licensed with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG). The United States Coast Guard (USCG) documents a vessel of 5 net tons or more and the Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) registers vessels under 5 net tons.

Are there any exceptions to the vessel license requirement?

AS 16.05.495 specifies that a vessel used exclusively for the commercial capture of salmon in commercial salmon management areas which include State waters between the latitude of Point Romanof and Cape Newenham and State waters surrounding Nunivak Island, or at a set net site, is exempt from the licensing requirements of AS 16.05.490.

How do I obtain a vessel license?

A *Commercial Vessel License Application* form must be completed and submitted with the appropriate fee to the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC). Applications are available from CFEC, from ADFG offices or our web site at www.cfec.state.ak.us.

Who can apply for the license?

The *Commercial Vessel License Application* form should be completed by the legal owner of the vessel or an authorized agent of the owner, such as the skipper operating the vessel. However, the legal owner's name and address must be provided on the form, as well as Social Security Number and date of birth. Once the vessel is licensed for the calendar year, it may be operated by anyone who holds the appropriate permits.

How much does a vessel license cost?

Vessel license fees are assessed depending upon the overall length of the vessel. Vessel license fees are not refundable, even if the vessel is not used in the fishery. Vessel license applicants receiving a new ADFG number, must also submit a one-time fee for the initial issuance of the ADFG triangle metal plate.

What does a vessel license consist of?

If the vessel is being licensed for the first time, the license will include a triangular metal plate with a permanent ADFG number assigned to the vessel. Whether it is a new license or a renewal, it will also include a triangular decal showing the year for which the license is valid and a printed vessel license receipt. If the vessel is used to fish salmon with net gear, a salmon net area registration decal is also required.

What happens if the vessel license sticker or vessel license receipt is lost?

If the vessel license sticker, metal plate, or license receipt is lost, a replacement may be obtained by completing a *Request for Duplicate License* form, available from CFEC, local ADFG offices or our website at www.cfec.state.ak.us. There is a fee for a duplicate metal plate, and a fee to replace the annual sticker and/or license receipt.



If a vessel is bought or sold, how is ownership changed in the records?

If a vessel is bought, and it has not been licensed for the current year, the new owner may simply complete a *Commercial Vessel License Application* form. Ownership will be changed automatically, as long as all necessary information has been provided.

If the vessel is already licensed for the year, the new owner should obtain the current vessel license receipt from the seller. This should be submitted with a completed *Vessel License Change of Information* form. The form may be validated by a CFEC employee, ADFG employee, or the Alaska Wildlife Troopers, so that the new owner may retain a copy to use as a temporary license while waiting for the new license to arrive in the mail.

If I buy a new boat, can I keep my old boat's ADFG number to use on the new boat?

No. The ADFG number is **permanently** assigned to a single vessel and is **not** transferable.

Does the vessel need to have an Alaska registration or USCG documentation number in order to be licensed?

Yes, a copy of the current Alaska registration or USCG documentation must be submitted with the application. All vessels powered by a minimum of 10 hp used on navigable waters which are **not** documented vessels, are required to have Alaska registration numbers issued by DMV. Vessels over 5 net tons are issued a USCG documentation number.

Is the vessel license all that is needed in order for the vessel to be fished in Alaska?

Many fisheries have additional licensing or registration requirements. Check with local ADFG offices for additional requirements.

Once the vessel is licensed, can it be used in all fisheries in Alaska?

Many fisheries in Alaska have area registration requirements which restrict the use of the vessel to a particular area of the State. For instance, salmon purse seine or net gear vessels may only be used to fish salmon in one administrative area each year.

How is a vessel registered for a salmon net area?

CFEC's *Commercial Vessel License Application* form contains a space to designate one area in which the vessel will fish salmon with net gear. The numbers of the CFEC purse seine or net gear permits that will be fished on the vessel must also be provided. When the vessel is registered for a salmon net area, the area will be printed on the vessel license receipt. If the vessel is being registered for the area for the first time, a small rectangular area decal will also be issued. The decal is to be attached to the metal ADFG number plate. New area decals will not be issued in subsequent years, as long as the vessel remains registered for the same area.