



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 NORTHEAST REGION
 55 Great Republic Drive
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SEP 19 2011

ATLANTIC SURFLAM AND OCEAN QUAHOG FISHERIES

Notice

Specification of 2012 Quotas and Surfclam Minimum Size Suspension

Effective January 1, 2012

For fishing year 2012 (January 1–December 31, 2012), the quota will remain 3.4 million bushels for surfclams, 5.333 million bushels for ocean quahogs, and 100,000 Maine bushels for Maine ocean quahogs. These quotas are unchanged from fishing year 2011. Also, the minimum size limit for surfclams is suspended for the 2012 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/uxosafety for more information or contact us at the number below for a pamphlet of information on military munitions.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why does it seem like the surfclam minimum size limit is suspended every year?	We have the authority to eliminate 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 the regulations allow for.
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.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/clams/ for more information on this fishery. If you have any questions, please contact Sustainable Fisheries at 978-281-9315.

