



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

February 28, 2007

*****Important Notice*****

**National Marine Fisheries Service has revised
the protocol for measuring net mesh size**

Dear Permit Holder:

This letter announces a change to the protocol for measuring net mesh size in the Northeast Region. On February 26, 2007, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published a final rule in the Federal Register to increase the weight used to measure mesh at or larger than 120 mm (4.72 inches).

Effective May 1, 2007, with the exception of gillnets, mesh size will be measured by a wedge-shaped gauge having a taper of 2 cm (0.79 inches) in 8 cm (3.15 inches), and a thickness of 2.3 mm (0.09 inches), inserted into the meshes under a pressure or pull of 5 kg (11.02 lb) for mesh size less than 120 mm (4.72 inches) and under a pressure or pull of 8 kg (17.64 lb) for mesh size at, or greater, than 120 mm (4.72 inches).

This change will apply to all mesh used in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone from Cape Hatteras to the Canadian border, including trawl nets, purse seines, and the twine top of scallop dredges, but excluding gillnets.

This letter does not contain all the regulatory provisions that pertain to measurement of net mesh size. A copy of the regulations can be obtained through a link to the Office of the Federal Register at NMFS's Northeast Regional Office website: <http://www.nero.noaa.gov>.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

This small entity compliance guide complies with Section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

