

**CHAPTER 6259**  
**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**CRAYFISH**

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**6259.0100 GENERAL RESTRICTIONS ON TAKING CRAYFISH.**

Subpart 1. **Seasons and size restrictions.** The open season for taking crayfish is April 1 through November 30. Crayfish less than one inch in length from tip of rostrum to tip of tail must be returned unharmed to the water.

Subp. 2. **Gear and marking requirements.** The following provisions in this subpart apply to gear and marking requirements on the taking of crayfish:

A. Crayfish may be harvested with gear allowed for rough fish and minnows in addition to gear specified in this part. Crayfish traps or harvesting devices must be identified in a permanent and legible manner with a plastic or metal tag not smaller than one inch by three inches bearing the user's name and address.

B. The mesh size for crayfish traps may not be less than one-half inch, stretch measure.

C. Floats used to mark traps may not be larger than four inches square or four inches in diameter.

D. Rough fish parts may be used within a crayfish trap as bait.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484*

**6259.0200 SALE OF CRAYFISH.**

All crayfish species in this state may be harvested and crayfish may be cultured for sale for food and processed bait. Crayfish may not be sold for live bait use within this state. Crayfish that are imported under a permit issued by the commissioner may be sold for aquarium use according to part 6259.1000, subpart 4.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484; 24 SR 1849*

**6259.0300 TENDING CRAYFISH TRAPS.**

Crayfish traps may be lifted from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset. Crayfish traps must be lifted at least once in each 24 hour period weather permitting. All trapped fish must be returned to the water.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484*

**6259.0400 DISPOSAL OF CRAYFISH.**

Dead crayfish or the shells or meats of crayfish may not be returned to the water or deposited on any shoreline or adjacent area.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484*

**6259.0500 CRAYFISH**

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**6259.0500 TRANSPORTATION AND STOCKING OF CRAYFISH.**

The transportation of any crayfish from one body of water to another within the state is prohibited, except by written permission from the commissioner.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484*

**6259.0600 IMPORTATION OF CRAYFISH PROHIBITED.**

The placement in waters of the state of any crayfish imported from outside the state is prohibited, except under permit by the commissioner.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484*

**6259.0700 PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION.**

Violation of any provision of state law pertaining to the harvest of crayfish, parts 6260.2500 to 6260.3400, or any terms or conditions of any permit may result in the permit being revoked in addition to any other penalties provided by law.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97A.418; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484*

**6259.0800 TAKING OF CRAYFISH FOR PERSONAL USE.**

Subpart 1. **License requirement for taking crayfish for personal use.** A person possessing a valid resident or nonresident angling license may take and possess for personal use not more than 25 pounds of live, whole freshwater crayfish.

Subp. 2. **Sale of crayfish taken for personal use prohibited.** Crayfish taken for personal use may not be sold.

Subp. 3. **Locations for taking crayfish for personal use.** Crayfish may be harvested for personal use in any waters of the state where fish may be taken by angling, and to which the harvester has legal access, unless otherwise posted.

Subp. 4. **Use of crayfish for bait.** Live crayfish taken may be used as bait only in the body of water where taken.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484*

**6259.0900 TAKING CRAYFISH FOR COMMERCIAL USE.**

Subpart 1. **Permits and resident angling license requirements.** A person taking or possessing more than 25 pounds of live, whole freshwater crayfish must first obtain a written permit from the commissioner. This permit is required to harvest crayfish for sale.

Subp. 2. **Persons allowed to assist permit holders.** Only persons listed on the permit may assist the permit holder in any phase of the crayfish harvesting operations.

Subp. 3. **Commercial use permit procedures.** Permits may be issued upon application pursuant to the criteria in this subpart:

A. Application must be made on forms, provided by the commissioner, and must be submitted to the area fisheries office.

B. Permits will be issued only to residents who possess a valid Minnesota angling license or are otherwise exempt from angling license requirements.

C. A person working for a permit holder must possess a valid Minnesota angling license or be otherwise exempt from angling license requirements.

D. Applications must be signed by the applicant. Failure to properly and fully complete an application may result in its rejection.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484*

**6259.1000 PERMIT CONDITIONS FOR COMMERCIAL CRAYFISH OPERATIONS.**

Subpart 1. **Permit duration.** A permit is not valid for more than one season and may be issued for shorter periods of time at the discretion of the commissioner.

Subp. 2. **Permit revocation.** The commissioner may revoke any permit upon determination that revocation is necessary for protection of natural resources.

Subp. 3. **Variance of harvest operations.** Any variance from permit conditions requires a written amendment which must be attached to and become part of the permit.

Subp. 4. **Importation of crayfish.** The importation of live crayfish or crayfish eggs into the state is prohibited except by written permit from the commissioner. Permits to import live crayfish for processing may only be issued provided no live crayfish are allowed to exit the processing facility. The commissioner may issue a permit to import live crayfish for aquarium sales for species that cannot survive in Minnesota if accidentally released.

Subp. 5. **Required records.** Permit holders must keep records of all crayfish sales transactions. Records must be verifiable with supporting sales slips and include the number or weight of all species of crayfish acquired by taking or purchase and sold, name and address of buyer, and date of each transaction. Records must be kept current within 48 hours. Failure to keep complete and current records may result in immediate revocation of the permit and may render the permit holder ineligible for future permits.

Subp. 6. **Commercial sale, purchase, and transportation of crayfish.** Crayfish legally harvested may be bought, sold, and transported for food purposes and as processed bait only, except as otherwise provided by part 6260.2900 and this part.

Crayfish must be kept separated from live fish when being transported within the state.

Subp. 7. **Exportation of crayfish.** Crayfish legally possessed may be exported for any purpose.

Subp. 8. **Notification of harvest operations.** The permit holder must inform the area fisheries office at least 24 hours in advance of the start of harvest operations for each water body.

Subp. 9. **Responsibility for harvest activities.** The permit holder must be in personal attendance at harvest operations and is responsible for all harvest activities. All members of the crew must be listed on the permit.

Subp. 10. **Identification of harvest sites.** Crayfish harvest sites will be identified to the area fisheries office by name and legal description or, if available, the Division of Waters inventory number.

Subp. 11. **Permits to rear and hold crayfish.** The commissioner may issue a permit to rear or hold crayfish of the species *Orconectes virilis* and *Orconectes immunis* for any waters, including waters that are not isolated from other waters.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 97A.418; 97C.811; 97C.871; and others at 19 SR 6*

**History:** *19 SR 484; 24 SR 1849*