

97C.605 TURTLES.

Subdivision 1. **Resident angling license required.** In addition to any other license required in this section, a person may not take, possess, or transport turtles without a resident angling license, except as provided in subdivision 2c.

Subd. 2. **Turtle seller's license.** (a) A person may not take, possess, buy, or transport turtles for sale; sell turtles; or take turtles for sale using commercial equipment without a turtle seller's license, except as provided in subdivision 2c.

(b) Except for renewals, no new turtle seller's licenses may be issued after August 1, 2002.

(c) A turtle seller's license is transferable by the turtle seller licensee by making application to the commissioner. A turtle seller's license may be transferred only once under this paragraph and the transfer must be to a child of the person holding the turtle seller's license.

Subd. 2a. **Recreational turtle license.** A person who does not possess a turtle seller's license must obtain a recreational turtle license to take turtles for personal use with commercial equipment.

Subd. 2b. **Turtle seller's apprentice license.** (a) A person with a turtle seller's license may list one person as an apprentice on the license. A person acting as an apprentice for a turtle seller licensee must have an apprentice license and may assist the turtle licensee in all licensed activities.

(b) The turtle seller licensee or turtle seller's apprentice licensee must be present at all turtle operations conducted under the turtle seller's license. Turtle operations include going to and from turtle harvest locations; setting, lifting, and removing commercial turtle equipment; taking turtles out of equipment; and transporting turtles from harvest locations.

(c) A turtle seller's apprentice license is transferable by the turtle seller licensee by making application to the commissioner. A person listed as an apprentice by a turtle seller licensee must not be listed as an apprentice by another turtle seller licensee nor may an apprentice possess a turtle seller's license or a recreational turtle license.

Subd. 2c. **License exemptions.** A person does not need a turtle seller's license or an angling license:

(1) when buying turtles for resale at a retail outlet;

(2) when buying a turtle at a retail outlet;

(3) if the person is a nonresident buying a turtle from a licensed turtle seller for export out of state. Shipping documents provided by the turtle seller must accompany each shipment exported out of state by a nonresident. Shipping documents must include: name, address, city, state, and zip code of the buyer; number of each species of turtle; and name and license number of the turtle seller; or

(4) to take, possess, and rent or sell up to 25 turtles greater than four inches in length for the purpose of providing the turtles to participants at a nonprofit turtle race, if the person is a resident under age 18. The person is responsible for the well-being of the turtles.

Subd. 3. **Taking; methods prohibited.** (a) A person may not take turtles by using:

(1) explosives, drugs, poisons, lime, and other harmful substances;

(2) traps, except as provided in paragraph (b) and rules adopted under this section;

- (3) nets other than anglers' fish landing nets;
- (4) commercial equipment, except as provided in rules adopted under this section;
- (5) firearms and ammunition;
- (6) bow and arrow or crossbow; or
- (7) spears, harpoons, or any other implements that impale turtles.

(b) Until new rules are adopted under this section, a person with a turtle seller's license may take turtles with a floating turtle trap that:

- (1) has one or more openings above the water surface that measure at least ten inches by four inches; and
- (2) has a mesh size of not less than one-half inch, bar measure.

Subd. 4. [Repealed, 2002 c 351 s 34]

Subd. 5. **Interfering with commercial or recreational turtle operations.** A person may not:

- (1) knowingly place or maintain an obstruction that will hinder, prevent, or interfere with a licensed turtle operation;
- (2) remove turtles, other wild animals, or fish from a floating or submerged trap licensed under the game and fish laws; or
- (3) knowingly damage, disturb, or interfere with a licensed turtle operation.

Subd. 6. **Rules.** The commissioner may adopt rules for taking turtles. The commissioner may prescribe seasons, limits, closed areas, and other restrictions and requirements the commissioner deems necessary for the conservation of turtles.

History: 1986 c 386 art 3 s 53; 1989 c 266 s 2,3; 1Sp1995 c 1 s 43; 2000 c 495 s 44,45; 2002 c 351 s 23; 2003 c 107 s 28; 2004 c 215 s 30,31; 1Sp2021 c 6 art 2 s 75