

Your cooperation in assuring that these practices are implemented in your facilities is required. Hopefully, this will eliminate the occurrence of shellfish related illness outbreaks and the possible financial and legal implications that noncompliance could have on your establishment.



State of New York
Mario M. Cuomo, Governor

Department of Health
Department of Agriculture and Markets
Department of Environmental Conservation

If you serve or sell shellfish



Are your shellfish properly tagged and are you purchasing your shellfish from a certified shellfish shipper? If not, you may be breaking the law and you may make someone sick.

Under the New York State Sanitary Code, all fresh or frozen shellfish or shucked shellfish (clams, mussels and oysters) must be properly tagged (14-1.33 [b]). Tags on containers of shellfish must be pre-printed or stamped with the names, addresses and state permit numbers of shippers. Tags must also include the state permit numbers of all reshippers, repackers or distributors, as well as the dates of the original shipment and of all reshipments, the common name and quantity of the shellfish (net weight, numerical count or standard measure). Containers of shellstock (shellfish in the shell) must be marked to include the area of harvest.

The State Environmental Conservation Law further requires that tags be kept on all shellfish containers until each container is empty. After the shellfish are sold, the tags must be retained for an additional 90 days, so that the source of the shellfish can be traced if a problem is reported. As a reminder, write the date you received the shellfish on the tag.

The tagging requirements are intended to identify the source of the shellfish. If shellfish are obtained from polluted waters, they can transmit diseases such as cholera, hepatitis and typhoid fever. These diseases can be contagious and cause serious health problems in your community.

If your shellfish are not properly tagged, you might be fined or your operating permit/license may be suspended or revoked. To protect yourself and your patrons, refuse to accept any untagged or inadequately marked shellfish. Also, purchase your shellfish from a certified shipper. Do not purchase shellfish from a digger unless, in addition to a valid digger permit, the person offering the shellfish for sale also possesses a valid shipper permit. A shellfish shipper must also provide you with an invoice that includes the shipper's name, address and state shellfish shipper permit number either preprinted or stamped on the invoice, the kind and quantity of shellfish and the date of sale.

Be sure of your supplier. Verify that the person you are buying from has a current, valid and appropriate shellfish shipper permit. If you have any questions as to the validity of a shipper, contact the Bureau of Shellfisheries, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, at (516) 751-7900 or 751-6381.

CLIP AND SAVE

ALL SHELLFISH TAGS MUST BE WATERPROOF AND INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Original Shipping Tag Includes

- name, address and permit number of original shellfish shipper either preprinted or stamped (shipper permit numbers are prefixed with the initials of state or country issuing permit, for example: NY000 [SS.]);
- common name of shellfish;
- net weight, numerical count or standard measure;
- identification of waters where harvested; and
- date of shipment.

Tag from Reshipper, Repacker or Distributor

Reshippers, repackers or distributors must place their permit numbers and dates of reshipments on original shipping tag OR replace original tag with a tag that lists:

- name, address and state permit number of reshipper and permit numbers of original shipper and all other reshippers;
- common name of shellfish;
- net weight, numerical count or standard measure;
- identification of waters where harvested; and
- dates of all shipments and reshipments.

Keep tags 90 days after using shellfish.