

Know the Law | Make Your Catch Count

Most USVI Saltwater Anglers Must Sign up with Federal Registry Before They Fish

As saltwater recreational anglers from across the region and around the world come to the U.S. Virgin Islands to enjoy its clear blue waters, fabulous beaches and legendary fishing, state and federal officials are urging them to remember the basics:

Bait, tackle, register.

A Federal law that went into effect last year requires most saltwater recreational anglers fishing in the U.S. Virgin Islands to sign up with the National Saltwater Angler Registry before they put their line in the water.

Specifically, the law applies to fishermen who are fishing in Federal waters more than three miles from shore and don't meet any of the exemptions in the law. In addition, for-hire operators who **do not hold** a Highly Migratory Species Charter Boat/Head Boat Permit are required to register.

People who registered in 2010 and are still required to do so have one year from their initial registration date to renew. The fee for registering or renewing is \$15, an amount meant to cover the cost of administering the Registry.

Fishermen are exempt from registering if they are under 16; only fish on federally permitted charter, party or guide boats; hold a Highly Migratory Species Angling permit; or are fishing commercially under a valid license.

Also, fishermen who have a valid saltwater license from any state or territory other than New Jersey, Hawaii, Puerto Rico or the USVI are automatically entered into the Registry and are not required to take further action.

Registration is the law, and fishermen can face stiff fines for not registering. But it is also a powerful new tool that will bring direct benefits to fishermen and others who care about the sustainability of recreational fishing.

As a national "directory" of saltwater fishermen, the Registry will make it possible to collect better data about who's been fishing and how often.

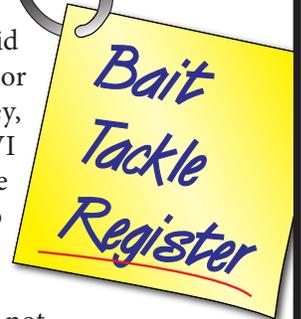
And better data ultimately means better decision-making when it comes to setting rules and regulations that are both fair and effective.

Finally, the Registry is an important part of an overall effort known as the Marine Recreational Information Program, or MRIP. MRIP is changing the way NOAA collects and reports recreational fishing data to ensure a process that is transparent, scientifically robust, and deserving of the public's trust.

Learn more at www.countmyfish.noaa.gov.

"The Registry is good for recreational fishermen, and critical for the future of recreational fishing."

Name, Title



Registration At a Glance

You MUST register if you:

- ← Fish in federal waters more than three miles from the shore, **and**
- ← Do not meet any of the exemptions under the law. **also ...**
- ← For-hire operators who **don't hold** a Highly Migratory Species Charter Boat/Head Boat Permit must register.

You are EXEMPT if you:

- ← Are under 16, **or**
- ← Only fish on federally permitted charter, party or guide boats, **or**
- ← Hold a Highly Migratory Species Angling permit, **or**
- ← Are fishing commercially under a valid license, **or**
- ← Are already registered through an exempted state.

**REGISTER AND FISH
THE SAME DAY**

Visit www.countmyfish.noaa.gov
Call toll-free: 888-MRIP-411 (888-674-7411)