

WAC 220-353-020 General gear rules—Commercial fishery. (1) (a)

Commercial shellfish pot, bottom fish pot, set line and set net gear must be marked with a buoy that bears the department approved and registered buoy brand issued to the license in a visible and legible manner. It is unlawful for the owner or operator of any commercial food fish or shellfish gear to leave the gear unattended in state or offshore waters unless the gear is marked. Violation of this subsection is punishable under RCW 77.15.520 or 77.15.522, depending on the circumstances of the violation.

(b) Exemptions may apply for commercial shellfish pot gear otherwise authorized for use by permit issued by the director.

(2) Violations of the following are punishable under 77.15.520, Commercial fishing—Unlawful gear or methods—Penalty:

(a) Buoys affixed to unattended commercial food fish or shellfish gear must be visible on the surface of the water except during strong tidal flow, extreme weather conditions, or as authorized by permit issued by the director.

(b) It is unlawful to operate any gill net unless there is a buoy, float, or other marker affixed within 5 feet of each end of the net and visible on the cork line. The buoy, float, or other marker must be labeled legibly and permanently with the name and gill-net license number of the owner of the net.

(c) It is unlawful to leave a gill net unattended at any time in the commercial salmon fishery.

(d) It is unlawful to allow salmon, sturgeon, or fish unlawful to retain that are entangled in commercial nets to pass through a power block or onto a power reel or drum.

(3) It is unlawful for any person who loses or abandons non-tribal commercial net fishing gear within the waters of the state to fail to:

(a) Contact the department of fish and wildlife within twenty-four hours of the loss, by phone at 855-542-3935, or online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/derelict/>; and

(b) Provide the following required information:

(i) Type of gear;

(ii) General location of the gear;

(iii) Latitude (if known) of the gear;

(iv) Longitude (if known) of the gear;

(v) Estimated water depth where the gear is located;

(vi) Date the gear was lost;

(vii) Time the gear was lost;

(viii) Name of gear's owner;

(ix) Telephone number of the gear's owner; and

(x) Email address (if available) of the gear's owner.

(c) Failing to report lost or abandoned nontribal commercial net gear under this subsection is an infraction under RCW 77.15.160.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.020, 77.12.045, and 77.12.047. WSR 21-24-031 (Order 21-259), § 220-353-020, filed 11/22/21, effective 1/1/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-353-020, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.055, 77.12.045, and 77.12.047. WSR 13-03-153 (Order 13-16), § 220-20-119, filed 1/23/13, effective 2/23/13.]