



*Larry Hogan, Governor*  
*Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor*  
*Mark Belton, Secretary*  
*Joanne Throwe, Deputy Secretary*

---

## **Important information for anglers targeting striped bass within catch-and-release areas of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries:**

Enforcement by Maryland Natural Resource Police of catch-and-release practices during the spring striped bass Chesapeake Bay and tributary fishery is primarily focused on conservation and upholding regulations to protect spawning striped bass. That focus has been consistent and has not changed. There are two distinct violations noted in COMAR 08.02.15.03E: one for keeping the fish out of water too long; and one for fishing outside the catch-and-release area during the Susquehanna Flats fishery. Each violation carries a fine, set by the district court system, of \$250. The department will continue its outreach to anglers on this issue. Officers on patrol will remind anglers launching in the area of the Susquehanna Flats/lower Susquehanna River fishery of the regulations. On its catch-and-release web page, Fishing and Boating Services advises keeping a fish out of water for no longer than the angler can hold his/her breath. Officers use their discretion in handling individual situations, so anglers should keep this in mind. Ideally, the fish should be released without being taken out of the water. **However, anglers taking a photo should do everything possible to reduce the amount of time that a fish is out of water: cradle the fish horizontally above the water, keep hands out of the gills and release the fish immediately. DO NOT pass the fish around to fishing partners or take multiple pictures at different angles.**