

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**The Maryland Department of Natural Resources**  
**Fishing and Boating Services**  
*Commercial Male Hard Crab Catch Limits — July through December 2024*

**WHAT THIS NOTICE DOES**

The Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, in consultation with the Blue Crab Industry Advisory Committee, announces the commercial male hard crab catch limits for the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries for July through December 2024. Male hard crab catch limits include catch of all male market categories combined (e.g., number ones, number twos, mixed/culls). Effective 12:01 a.m. July 1, 2024, the catch limits are:

<b>Daily Commercial Catch Limits for Male Hard Crabs by License Type</b>					
<b>Dates</b>	<b>Container</b>	<b>LCC</b>	<b>TFL or CB3</b>	<b>TFL with CB6 or CB3 with CB6</b>	<b>TFL with CB9 or CB3 with CB9</b>
Jul 1 - 31, 2024	No Male Hard Crab Catch Limits				
Aug 1 - 29, 2024	Bushel	4	8	12	15
	Lug	2	5	8	10
Aug 30 - Sep 2, 2024	No Male Hard Crab Catch Limits				
Sep 3 - 30, 2024	Bushel	4	8	12	15
	Lug	2	5	8	10
Oct 1 - Nov 30, 2024	No Male Hard Crab Catch Limits				
Dec 1 - 15, 2024	No Male Hard Crab Harvest Allowed				

### License Acronyms

LCC – Limited Crab Harvester License (up to 50 pots)

TFL – Unlimited Tidal Fish License

CB3 – 300 Pot Crab Harvester License

CB6 – 600 Pot Crab Harvester License

CB9 – 900 Pot Crab Harvester License

### Container Definitions

Bushel, circular – A circular container with inside dimensions not exceeding 12” height, 18” top diameter, 13-½” bottom diameter

Bushel, rectangular – A rectangular container with inside dimensions not exceeding 11” height, 19-½” length, 12-½” width

Lug – A rectangular container with inside dimensions not exceeding 12-¾” height, 22-7/8” top length, 14-7/8” top width, 21” bottom length, 13” bottom width

Daily catch limits for male hard crabs are based on the Blue Crab Winter Dredge Survey results, conducted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and in consultation with the Blue Crab Industry Advisory Committee.

All catch of male hard crabs on board a vessel must be kept in the same type of container, although crabs of different sexes may be kept in different types of containers. For example, a harvester may have all males in bushels and all females in lugs but could not have males or females in both bushels and lugs. Commercial crabbers using lugs should report harvest in pounds when completing Commercial Harvest Reports.

Crew limits are in effect as described in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article, §4-814. If crew members are not on board, the licensee is restricted to the TFL or CB3 catch limits.

### **WHERE THIS NOTICE APPLIES**

This applies to the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries, including the Maryland tributaries of the Potomac River.

### **WHY THIS IS NECESSARY**

This action is necessary to ensure that male blue crab harvest does not exceed the Chesapeake Bay male conservation trigger referenced in Amendment 2 to the Chesapeake Bay Blue Crab Fishery Management Plan.

### **WHO THIS NOTICE AFFECTS**

This applies to commercial crabbers who harvest male blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries.

### **AUTHORITY**

Code of Maryland Regulations 08.02.03.14G

**Josh Kurtz**  
Secretary of Natural Resources