

PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS

HANDLING YOUR CATCH

WRAP IT RIGHT!

Restriction on cleaning and canning your catch in non-tidal water (for all species except salmon)

To comply with the law, follow these simple guidelines when you clean and transport your fish.

- ▶ **Do not can, bottle or fillet fish** caught by sport fishing in non-tidal waters **except at your permanent residence** (commercial canning of these fish is not permitted).
- ▶ **Leave the head, tail and all fins on your catch** until you get them to your permanent (ordinary) residence. We suggest you immediately remove the gills and internal organs of any fish you keep to reduce spoilage.
- ▶ **Do not freeze fish together in an unrecognizable block.**
- ▶ Please refer to the fish cleaning guidelines in “Angling Safety in Bear Country” ([URL](#)).

TRANSPORTING AND EXPORTING FISH

In order to enforce quotas and size limits, our officers must be able to count, measure and identify your catch.

If you caught the fish yourself you must:

- ▶ Keep your angling licence handy while travelling.
- ▶ Transport no more than your legal limit.
- ▶ Ensure your fish can be identified, counted and measured if necessary (see “Wrap it Right”).

If you are transporting fish for someone else:

- ▶ Obtain and carry a signed letter from that person with the following details: the angler’s name, address, telephone number and fishing licence number; when and where the fish were caught; the date and place at which you were given the fish; the number, species and

size of the fish that you have been given and the name and address of the person to whom the fish are to be delivered.

- ▶ If you will be exporting the fish from B.C., carry the letter and insure that it is available for inspection by fishery enforcement and/or customs officers if requested to do so.
- If someone else caught the fish and gave it to you for your personal consumption:
- ▶ Keep in your possession a signed letter from the angler until you have eaten the fish.
 - ▶ The letter should list the name, address and telephone number of the angler who gave you the fish; the number, species and size of the fish; and when and where the fish were caught.

RELEASING FISH THE GENTLE WAY



There is a growing trend among anglers to catch and release, unharmed, a part of their allowable catch. A fish that appears unharmed may not survive if carelessly handled, so please abide by the following:

- **Play and release fish as rapidly as possible.** A fish played for too long may not recover.
- **Keep the fish in the water as much as possible.** A fish out of water is suffocating. Internal injuries and scale loss is much more likely to occur when out of water.

- **Roll fish onto their backs (while still in the water).** This may reduce the amount they struggle, therefore minimizing stress, etc.
- **Carry needle-nose pliers.** Grab the bend or round portion of the hook with your pliers, twist pliers upside down, and the hook will dislodge. Be quick, but gentle. Single barbless hooks are recommended, if not already stipulated in the regulations.
- **Any legal fish that is deeply hooked, hooked around the gills or bleeding should be retained as part of your quota.** If the fish cannot be retained legally, you can improve its chances for survival by cutting the leader and releasing it with the hook left in.
- **Nets used for landing your catch, should have fine mesh and a knotless webbing** to protect fish from abrasion and possible injury.
- **If you must handle the fish, do so with your bare, wet hands (not with gloves).** Keep your fingers out of the gills, and don’t squeeze the fish or cause scales to be lost or damaged. It is best to leave fish in the water for photos. If you must lift a fish then provide support by cradling one hand behind the front fins and your other hand just forward of the tail fin. Minimize the time out of the water, then hold the fish in the water to recover. If fishing in a river, point the fish upstream while reviving it. When the fish begins to struggle and swim normally, let it go.