



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

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### **Buoy Line Marking Rules for Trap Fisheries in 2022**

#### Terms

- Buoy Line means the line that extends through the water column from the buoy at the surface to a single trap on the ocean floor or to a groundline that connects multiple traps in a trawl and extends no more than 12' from the first trap in the trawl.
- Surface System means that portion of the buoy line comprised of the first 12' extending down through the water column from the buoy at the surface.
- Body of the Buoy Line means that portion of the buoy line extending up the water column from the trap or groundline to the surface system.
- Solid Mark means marks within the buoy line that are continuous and not containing gaps or spaces, such as tape, paint, or an insert of an appropriately colored line.
- Non-Solid Mark means marks within the buoy line that are not continuous, such as tracers.
- Weak Line Contrivance means a device installed into the buoy line that is designed to part when exposed to 1,700 pounds of tension or less.

#### Buoy Line Marking Requirements for Commercial Trap Gear in State-Waters.

- In the surface system, there is to be one red mark measuring at least 3'.
- In the body of the buoy line, there are to be at least four solid or non-solid red marks measuring at least 2', with at least two marks occurring in the top 50% of the body of the buoy line and two marks occurring in the bottom 50% of the body of the buoy line.
- There is to be at least one solid or non-solid red mark for every 60' within the body of the buoy line.
- If fishermen are using buoy lines rigged with a weak contrivance that is red (e.g., an insert of red or candy cane weak rope) or has a red tracer in it (e.g., certain South Shore sleeves) then the weak contrivance may double as a red mark in the body of the buoy line.
- If the buoy line is red, then all buoy line marks are to be white.
- No marks are to appear in the buoy line unless they are red marks, or white marks if the buoy line is red.

#### Buoy Line Marking Requirements for Massachusetts Commercial Lobster and Jonah Crab Pot/Trap Gear in Federal Waters Within LCMA 1, LCMA 2, and Outer Cape Cod LCMA.

- In the surface system, there is to be one red mark measuring at least 3' and no more than 1' below the red mark there is to be a solid green mark measuring at least 1'.

- In the body of the buoy line, there are to be three solid or non-solid marks measuring at least 2' with at least one mark occurring in the the top third, one mark occurring in the middle third, and one mark occurring in the bottom third.
- Each marks in the body of the buoy line are to be comprised of at least 1' of red and 1' green. While the green and red marks need not be adjacent, they cannot be spaced more than 6" apart.
- There are to be no red marks in the buoy lines that do not have a corresponding green mark.
- If fishermen are using buoy lines rigged with a weak contrivance that is red (e.g., an insert of red or candy cane weak rope) or has a red tracer in it (e.g., certain South Shore sleeves) then the weak contrivance may double as a red mark in the body of the buoy line.
- If the buoy line is the same color as one of the marks (i.e., red or green), then the mark with that color is to be replaced with a white mark.

**Buoy Line Marking Requirements for All Commercial Lobster and Crab Trap, Fish Pot and Whelk Pot Gear Set in MA State Waters**



**Buoy Line Marking Requirements for All Commercial Lobster and Crab Trap Gear Set in Federal Waters of LCMA 1, 2 and OCCLCMA**

