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# Fish News

Dec. 29, 2008

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## News from NOAA



### FFPs Expire This Month

The Federal fisheries permits (FFPs) expire in two days (on December 31, 2008) and need to be renewed. Fishermen need to get them renewed before they fish for groundfish in federal waters. Those who are going to fish Tanner crab or fish Pacific cod inside state waters, do not need it right away. The FFPs are issued on a three-year cycle and are commonly forgotten unless the vessel is checked by the Coast Guard or NOAA Fisheries. NOAA Fisheries sends out renewal notices, but in NOAA's experience, a significant number of fishermen overlook responding. **The FFP is required for any vessel that retains groundfish, even as bycatch, from federal waters (3-200 nautical miles).** Vessels fishing for halibut in federal waters are required to have an FFP because those vessels are required to retain Pacific cod bycatch. It is also NOAA's experience that fishermen confuse the FFP with the License Limitation Permit (LLP) -- both are issued by NOAA Fisheries and have similar appearances and names.

### Make Sure Your VMS Units Are Transmitting

NOAA would also like to remind fishermen to ensure their vessel monitoring system (VMS) units are transmitting. One of the commonly used VMS models is no longer

supported and many fishermen have switched units. NOAA finds that often when fishermen switch units, they neglect to notify NOAA Fisheries Enforcement. **When a new VMS unit is installed, the captain is required to notify Enforcement before going fishing.** NOAA also encourages fishermen to confirm transmissions if the boat has been inactive for some time or they are uncertain whether the unit is transmitting. Fishermen can confirm transmissions with the Kodiak Enforcement office at (907) 486-3298 or with the Juneau Enforcement office at (907) 586-7225.

## Contact NOAA for Help with Fishing Regulations

Fisheries regulations are complex. NOAA says it would rather clear up a misunderstanding beforehand rather than deal with it afterwards. Fishermen who have questions are welcome to call NOAA's office at (907) 486-3298. The NOAA Fisheries Alaska Region web site ([www.fakr.noaa.gov](http://www.fakr.noaa.gov)) is also a good resource for information.

[Link to Alaska Fisheries Regulations](#)

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