

- a) A fishing tournament permit from the Department of Natural Resources if needed if:
- 1) Prizes are offered for tagged fish or marked fish and where any of the waters listed in Section 810.45 are named as tournament site; or
  - 2) The fishing event is conducted over a period of more than five days during any calendar year, and prizes with a total value in excess of \$1,000 are offered, and where any of the waters listed in Section 810.45 are named as a tournament site; or
  - 3) Special exemption to the site specific regulations for daily creel and size limit (not to exceed the statewide statutory limits) is requested for:
    - A) catch, hold for weigh-in, and release tournaments for muskie (all waters);
    - B) black bass catch and release tournaments (Lake Michigan and streams except that the Mississippi, Ohio, and Wabash Rivers are not eligible for permits which exempt participants from daily catch and size limits;
    - C) special catch and release tournaments for which the proceeds go towards youth education and/or charity type projects.
    - D) national catch and release tournaments; and
    - E) special fishing tournaments/events for children under 16, for disabled persons, or for adults over 65.
- b) requests for a permit shall be made on applications provided by the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fisheries, at least 60 days prior to the tournament date.
- c) Issuance or denial of a permit shall be based upon the following criteria:
- 1) The capability of the fishery resource to absorb the tournament with minimal impact to its well-being.
  - 2) The location of the tournament; catch and release management zones on streams are not eligible for permits.
  - 3) The Mississippi, Wabash, and Ohio are not eligible for permits which exempt participants from daily catch and size limits for smallmouth bass.
  - 4) The evaluation of the adverse impacts resulting from the additional fishing pressure generated by the tournament on the fish population and the targeted fish species. The evaluation must demonstrate minimal and short-term impacts in order for the Department of Natural Resources to issue the permit. Specific items to be considered include:
    - A) biological status of the fish population including the species sought;
    - B) length of the tournament;
    - C) number of boats and anglers participating in the tournament;
    - D) for tagged fish tournaments; provisions for obtaining and tagging targeted fish species; and
    - E) safety of anglers and potential boater-user conflicts.
  - 5) Demonstrates adequate provisions for holding, handling and releasing caught fish. Specific criteria are:
    - A) Tournament officials must be able to certify that all boats possess a live well (except muskie fishing tournaments) measuring at least 18" long, 12" deep, and 12" wide and be fitted with a functioning aerator and water pump.
    - B) Following the weigh-in, fish must be released away from the weigh-in site and as near to the spot where the catch was made as possible by means of a common release boat or vehicle, or by individual boats.
    - C) If a common release boat or vehicle is utilized, the anglers transporting the fish to be released are exempt from the daily creel limit. A common release boat and holding tank used to transport fish for release shall be adequate to carry a tank constructed of a suitable material (aluminum or fiberglass) with smooth interior walls with no obstructions to trap or injure fish. The tank must be able to hold at least one gallon of water per pound of fish, provide adequate aeration, and maintain constant desirable temperature to sustain their well-being. The tank must have operating hatches to prevent fish from jumping out of the tank and allow quick opening and closing for introduction and removal of fish. Detailed specifications on the design and use of a fish holding tank are available upon request from the IDNR, Division of Fisheries. Individual boats and anglers returning their catches of fish back to a release site must adhere to daily creel limits. Tournament officials must be able to certify that a common release boat is being utilized for this tournament
    - D) For catch, weigh-in, and release muskie tournaments, all boats must have a fish cradle (made from netting) to temporarily hold the muskie in the water while an official determines the length or weight of the fish prior to release. Muskie may not be transported to a weigh-in site.
  - 6) Adequate identification of participants in fishing tournament for law enforcement purposes. Specific criteria are:
    - A) Tournament officials must keep and have available on site a written record or log of daily participants (including names and boat registration numbers) for inspection by Department of Natural Resources officials.
    - B) Each participant and boat must be identified in an easily recognizable manner at a distance (patch or hat or back).
- d) Failure to acquire a permit as referenced in subsection (a) above is a petty offense and will result in denial of future applications for a Fishing Tournament Permit by that applicant, sponsor or group for a period up to five (5) years.