



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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New IDNR New Fishing Tournament Permitting System now Online

Tournament Organizers will be able to apply for a permit and enter catch data online

SPRINGFIELD – A new permitting system for the organizers of fishing tournaments is now live on the IFishIllinois.org website. The new online permitting system creates a quick, easy mechanism for applying for a fishing tournament permit and gathering the anglers' catch data afterwards. With the dramatic increase in the number of fishing tournaments in recent years, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) staff needs to be able to assess the effects of fishing tournaments on the state's fisheries (over 1,300 tournaments have been approved using the paper version of the permit application this year). Information collected will help site managers maintain a balance between tournament anglers and the general public.

What's New?

- All public waters of the State of Illinois now require a tournament permit before the event can take place. State-owned waters also have required an Activity Permit in the past. That will now be incorporated into the online tournament permitting process.
- As in the past, for those tournaments launching out of a ramp not owned by the State of Illinois, permission will have to be gained from that entity prior to the event, as well as the requirement to have a Fishing Tournament Permit.

What's the process?

- Tournament organizers or directors will create an account at:
<http://www.ifishillinois.org/programs/tournament.html>
- The application will ask for tournament dates and location.

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- That application will be sent to the biologist and the site superintendent - if the water is state-owned. Within two weeks the organizer will receive approval or denial.
- For those waters not owned by the state, the tournament director will need permission from the owner to launch.
- Tournaments for the following year may be scheduled on or after Nov. 1 of each year.
- ***For all who have applied for a fishing tournament permit in the past, an account will be created for you. There will be no need to create a new account. Each tournament director will receive an e-mail notification.***

Fishing Tournament Defined:

- A tournament is defined as an organized, competitive fishing event in which two or more individuals participate.
- The event is sponsored or promoted by an individual or organization.
- Participants compete for trophies, cash, prizes, citations or other recognition for participation in the event.
- The event is conducted during a specified time period.
- This definition is narrowly written to exclude impromptu groups of friends meeting to fish together.
- Boats must have an aerated livewell with recirculating water. No regulation exemptions will be granted except for youth tournaments and tournaments held on Lake Michigan.
- Tournament permits are required for all game species including muskie, walleye, sauger, crappie, catfish, salmon, trout and bass. In addition, bow-fishing tournaments will require permits.

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