

S P O R T
fishing
G U I D E

NUNAVUT

**APRIL 1, 2024 TO
MARCH 31, 2025**



This pamphlet is not a legal document. The information is for guidance purposes only. Amendments sometimes occur after the printing of the guide. For more detailed information, consult a Fishery Officer or a Conservation Officer.

Information on Arctic Recreational Fisheries can be found at:

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/recreational-recreative/arctic-arctique/index-eng.html>

The full Northwest Territories Fisheries Regulations can be found at:

https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._847/page-1.html



Ce guide est disponible en français sur notre site web au <https://gov.nu.ca/fr/environment/>

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Your Licence

A Sport Fishing Licence is required by anyone intending to sport fish in Nunavut other than a beneficiary of the *Nunavut Agreement*.

Licences are available from the Department of Environment, most sport fishing lodges, and some retail stores.

Non-resident anglers must obey the import laws of their country when returning home. Check with customs officials in your home country about regulations governing the importation and transportation of fish.

Residency

Nunavut Resident: A Canadian citizen or permanent resident who has resided continuously in Nunavut for a period of three months immediately preceding the day they begin to fish.

Canadian Resident: A Canadian citizen or permanent resident who normally resides in any part of Canada other than Nunavut immediately preceding the day they begin to fish.

Non-resident: A person other than a Nunavut Resident or a Canadian Resident.

Licence Fees (2024-2025)

Nunavut Residents and Canadian Residents over 65 are required to have a licence, however there is no fee.

The federal Goods and Services Tax (5%) must be added to all fees.

	Season	3-Day*
Nunavut Resident	\$11.48	-
Canadian Resident	\$22.97	\$17.23
Non-resident	\$43.04	\$34.46

*A 3-day licence is valid for three consecutive days commencing on the date stated on the licence.

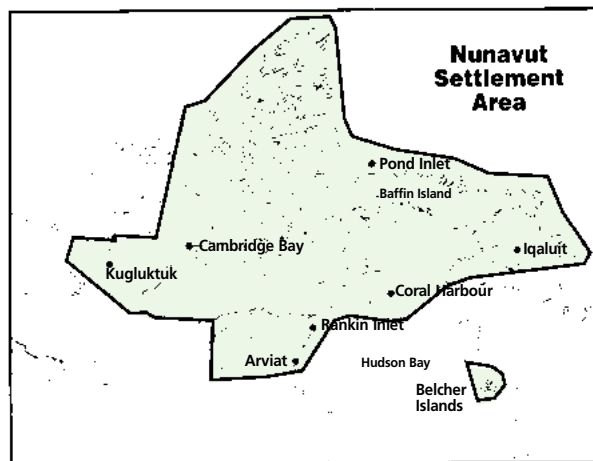
Note: in 2017, the Government of Canada passed the Service Fees Act (Canada), which requires that fees for authorizations issued under federal legislation increase annually. As Nunavut sport fishing licences are issued pursuant to the Fisheries Act (Canada), the fees for these licences have been increased to comply with the Service Fees Act.

Unless otherwise noted, Sport Fishing Licences are not required by;

- Nunavut Residents and Canadian Residents under 16 years of age
- Non-residents under the age of 16 who are accompanied by a person who holds a Sport Fishing Licence

Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA)

Sport fishing in the NSA may be subject to terms and conditions in accordance with the *Nunavut Agreement*. For further information, contact the local Hunters and Trappers Organization or the local Conservation Officer.



National Parks

A Nunavut Sport Fishing Licence is not valid in a national park. A separate national parks fishing licence is required and may be obtained from a Parks Canada office.

Fishing is permitted in Auyuittuq National Park. Fishing is not currently permitted in Quttinirpaq, Sirmilik, Ukkusiksalik, Qausuittuq National Parks or in the Wrecks of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror National Historic Site.

Parks Canada Offices

Iqaluit - (867) 975-4673
Pangnirtung - (867) 473-2500
Pond Inlet - (867) 899-8092
Qikiqtarjuq - (867) 927-8834

Before You Go Fishing

- Ensure that you have a valid Sport Fishing Licence.
- Ensure that your licence has not expired. Expiry dates are indicated on the licences.
- Sign your licence.
- Read this guide thoroughly each year. Regulations and sport fishing limits may have changed.
- Take your licence and this guide with you while fishing.
- Keep your licence in a sealed plastic bag in your tackle box and you'll never forget it!



General Regulations

The regulations state that:

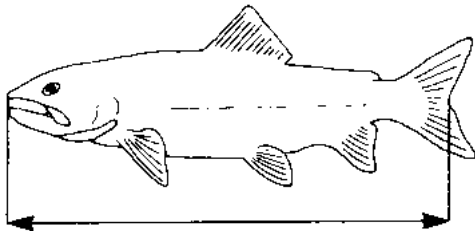
- You must carry your Sport Fishing Licence and produce it at the request of an officer.
- Live fish cannot be used for bait. Live fish or live fish eggs cannot be put into Nunavut waters.
- During the open water season, you may fish with only a single line or rod. No more than two hooks can be attached to the line.
- While fishing through the ice, you may fish with no more than two lines, or two rods and lines. No more than two hooks can be attached to any line. You must remain within 50 metres (55 yards) of your line or lines.
- You may use a hand net for landing fish caught by angling.
- You may not use or possess a gaff while sport fishing.
- Dip nets may be used for ciscoes and suckers. The diameter of the dip net hoop cannot exceed one metre, and all other species of fish caught must immediately be returned to the water.
- Snagging of fish is prohibited.

- There are special regulations if you intend to spear fish. No person shall engage in spear fishing except while swimming. The use of a kakivak or fish leisters is restricted to Nunavut beneficiaries and their assignees. For more information contact the local Conservation Officer or Fishery Officer.
- It is an offence to waste any fish that is suitable for food.
- It is an offence to fish within 25 yards downstream from the lower entrance to any fish-way, canal, obstacle or leap.
- It is an offence to sell any fish caught by sport fishing.
- You must not leave fish, fish remains or refuse from fishing in the water or on the ice.
- Except when preparing your fish for immediate consumption, you must leave the skin on the fish to help in determining the species. Fillets must be separated before freezing them. Two fillets are regarded as one fish.
- When fish are stored other than at your permanent residence, the fish must be identified by name and Sport Fishing Licence number of the person who caught them. The name and licence number must also be marked on the outside of the package if you are transporting it.
- No person shall fish on the Tree River after a Conservation Officer or Fishery Officer has given notice.

Should you be convicted for a first offence of the Fisheries Act, you may be liable to a fine of up to \$100,000. If you are uncertain about any point, contact a Fishery Officer or Conservation Officer before fishing.

Daily Catch Limits (DCL) and Possession Limits (PL)

SPECIES	WATERS	DCL	PL	SIZE LIMITS/OTHER RESTRICTIONS
ARCTIC CHAR	COPPERMINE RIVER (UPSTREAM FROM BLOODY FALLS)	1	1	NONE
	DIANA RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES, DIANA LAKE, PETER LAKE AND THE WATERS OF RANKIN INLET WITHIN 8 KM OF THE MOUTH OF THE DIANA RIVER AT 62°50'N, 29°24'W	2	4	NONE
	GREINER LAKE, FRESHWATER CREEK AND ITS TRIBUTARIES AND THE WATERS OF CAMBRIDGE BAY, NORTH AND WEST OF A LINE DRAWN FROM A POINT AT 69°05'N, 105°04'W TO A POINT AT 69°06'10"N, 105°02'W	1	1	NONE
	MELIADINE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES, MELIADINE LAKE AND THE WATERS OF PRAIRIE BAY WITHIN 8 KM OF THE MELIADINE RIVER AT 62°52'N, 92°06'W	2	4	NONE
	SYLVIA GRINNELL LAKE AND SYLVIA GRINNELL RIVER AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES AND THE WATERS OF FROBISHER BAY WITHIN 8 KM OF THE MOUTH OF THE SYLVIA GRINNELL RIVER AT 63°44'N, 68°24'W	1	1	NONE
	TREE RIVER (CORONATION GULF)	1	2	NONE
	ALL OTHER NUNAVUT WATERS	4	7	NONE
ARCTIC GRAYLING	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	3	5	NONE
BURBOT	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	5	10	NONE
DOLLY VARDEN	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	4	7	NONE
LAKE TROUT	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	3	5	NONE
NORTHERN PIKE	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	5	10	NONE
WALLEYE	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	5	10	NONE
BROOK TROUT	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	3	5	NONE
SUCKERS	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	NO LIMIT	NO LIMIT	NONE
WHITEFISH (ALL SPECIES)	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	10	20	NONE
CISCOES	ALL NUNAVUT WATERS	350	350	NONE



Fork length is the measurement from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail.

Daily Catch Limit is the number of fish of each species which a person may catch and retain in a 24-hour period from one midnight to the next midnight.

Possession Limit is the total number of fish of each species that a person is entitled to possess at any time.

These limits apply to individuals only.

Group limit fishing is NOT permitted.

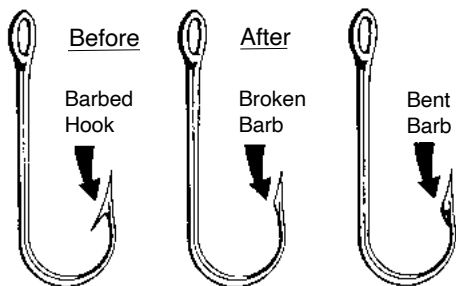
Please note the limits listed in the above table do not apply within national parks.

Catch and Release Fishing

There is a growing trend among conservation-minded anglers towards the use of barbless hooks and the practice of catch and release fishing.

Barbless hooks permit easier removal of the hook, minimizing damage to the fish, as well as reducing handling time and subsequently increasing its chances of survival. Many fish that are released after being caught with a barbed hook later die from excessive handling and/or bleeding. It is recommended that the barbs on your hooks be filed off or pinched down with pliers.

How to Make a Barbless Hook



Catch and release fishing allows a fish to be returned to the water to spawn, which helps in maintaining future Nunavut fish stocks.

When releasing a fish, the following steps should be taken:

1. Use barbless hooks, since they help reduce handling time and damage to the fish.
2. Keep the fish in the water as much as possible while removing the lure. If you must handle the fish, keep your hands wet and hold it gently behind the gills. Do not put your fingers in the gill covers, hold the fish by its eye sockets, or squeeze the belly. Do not use rough, hard-surfaced gloves or mitts as you may remove scales from the fish, increasing the chance of infection.

3. When removing the hook, use long-nosed pliers to grasp the shank, working gently back and forth until the hook is free. Do not tear out the hook.
4. When releasing the fish, hold it in the water in its normal swimming position, moving it slowly back and forth allowing water to run through its gills. It should swim away under its own power. The time involved in this step may vary from a few seconds to several minutes.

Award for Tagged Fish

Fish in many areas of Nunavut are tagged for fishery management studies. With the information collected from fish tags, fishery managers are able to determine the distribution, movements, relative abundance and growth rates of fish. They are then better able to protect fish from overexploitation and adverse effects of industrial development.

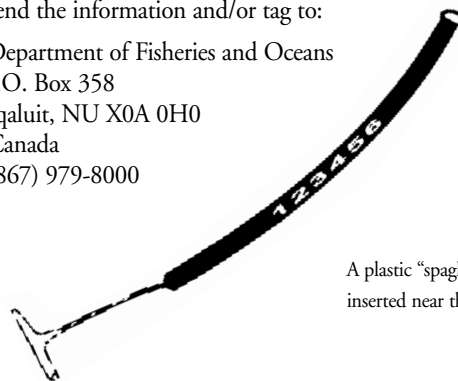
The Department of Fisheries and Oceans awards anglers who provide information about tagged fish caught in Nunavut. If you catch a tagged fish, mail the tag to the address below and include a brief note stating:

1. where caught; 2. when caught; 3. length; 4. weight; 5. sex (if you can determine it); 6. lure used; and your name and address.

If the fish is strong enough to be released, note the measurements and tag number, and put the fish back in the water.

For fish caught in any waters within Nunavut, send the information and/or tag to:

Department of Fisheries and Oceans
P.O. Box 358
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
Canada
(867) 979-8000



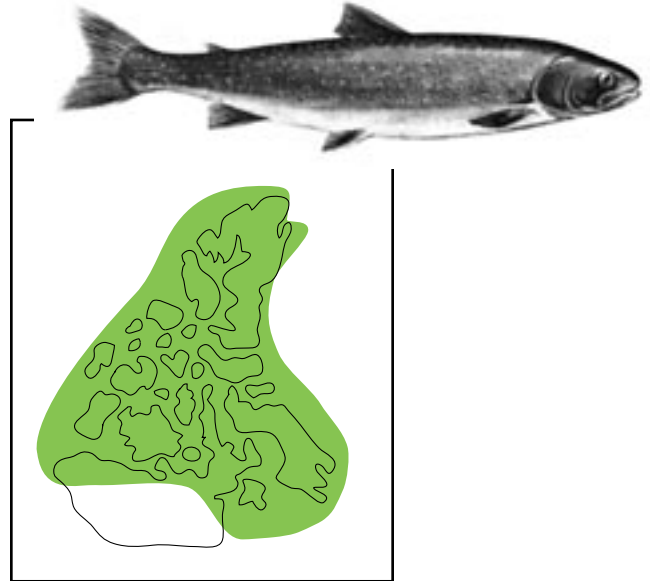
A plastic "spaghetti" tag is inserted near the dorsal fin.

Fish of Nunavut

Arctic Char

The arctic char has a dark green back which shades down to silvery sides and belly, with pinkish spots on the sides. At spawning time, the breeding males develop a protruding and hooked lower jaw, and their belly and sides may turn vivid orange-red.

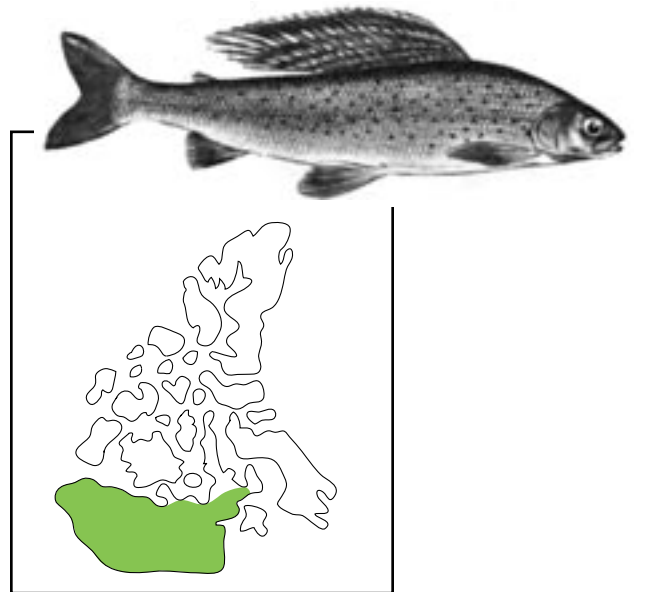
Char can be found from Baffin Island west to the Yukon. Some are land-locked and live in fresh water year round. Others spend the summer in the ocean, but spawn and over-winter in fresh waters flowing into the Arctic Ocean or Hudson Bay. Char weighing 6.8 kilograms (15 pounds) are common in some rivers, but their average is usually 2.3 to 3.2 kilograms (five to seven pounds). Char belong to the salmon family and are an acclaimed delicacy to gourmets everywhere.



Arctic Grayling

The arctic grayling is a beautiful fish: dark blue on the back and purple grey on the sides. A distinctive characteristic is its large, sail-like dorsal fin, which is coloured a blackish blue with violet spots. Average weights are from 0.4 to 0.9 kilograms (one to two pounds).

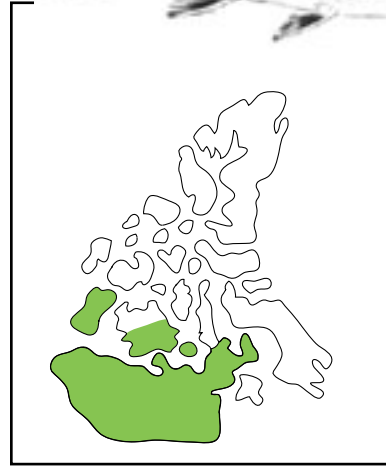
The grayling is particularly common in the Coppermine, Thelon and Back drainages. During the summer, they can be caught in cold, swift rivers and in bays of some larger lakes.



Lake Trout

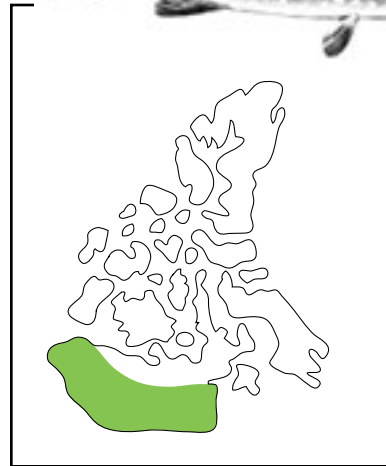
Lake trout are coloured with light spots on a darker background and with a light colour underneath. The background colour may vary from light green or grey to dark green, brown or black.

Lake trout are found throughout the Thelon, Back and Coppermine drainage systems. “Lakers” are plentiful and provide spectacular sport fishing in hundreds of fast-flowing rivers and streams. The best trophy recorded has been a 29.5 kilograms (65 pounds) lunger from Great Bear Lake. Many others have come close to this and 13.6 to 18.1 kilograms (30 to 40 pounds) fish are common.



Northern Pike

Pike, or jackfish, prefer warm, slow, heavily vegetated rivers, or warm, weedy bays of lakes. Pike have a long body with a dark green to brown colour along the dorsal surface. The colour of the sides is lighter and marked with seven to nine irregular vertical rows of yellow to white, bean-shaped spots. They generally run between 2.3 and 6.8 kilograms (five to 15 pounds), but quite a few pike weighing 13.6 and 18.1 kilograms (30 to 40 pounds) have been taken.



Walleye

The walleye is a member of the perch family and has sharp teeth as well as two dorsal fins, the front one supported by large spines. Walleye are olive-brown flecked with gold shading to a white belly. The large, silvery eyes are distinctive.

Also known as doré or pickerel, walleye generally run up to 2.3 kilograms (five pounds). They're easiest to fish in the spring when they are running in the rivers.



Brook Trout

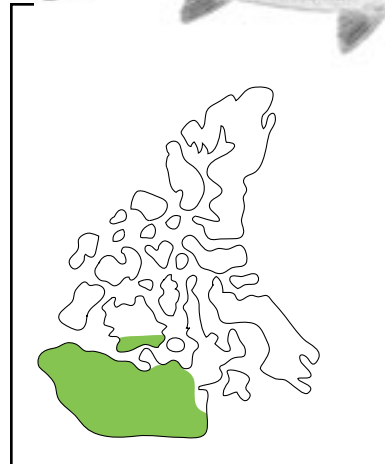
 (neither photo nor map are shown)

The Brook trout are distinguished by the combination of dark green marbling on their dorsal fin and by the red spots with blue halos on its sides.

The Brook trout are also known as the Belchers Trout. They are an indigenous population of Brook trout that exists on, in and around the Belcher islands. They are fished for food and sport and are quite unique in the sport fishing world. The sea-run specimens are known to reach relatively large sizes.

Lake Whitefish

The lake, or humpback, whitefish occurs mainly in lakes, although some are taken in larger rivers and some in lakes with brackish waters. It is large and somewhat egg-shaped with silver sides, which may shade to dark or olive-brown. The snout overhangs the lower jaw and has two flaps between the openings of each nostril. The whitefish is mainly a bottom feeder, eating clams, snails, insects and invertebrates. Some may feed on plankton. Spawning takes place in the fall on rocky reefs in lakes or the shallows of rivers.



Boating Safety

- Make sure your boat is in excellent condition and appropriate for the body of water.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back.
- Do not overload your boat.
- Ensure that each person wears a life jacket.
- Bring along a bailing can and an extra paddle.
- Bring clothing made of insulating material to protect yourself from hypothermia in cold weather.
- Postpone your trip if poor weather is forecasted. If you are on the water when a storm arises, get to shore quickly.
- If you capsize, don't worry about your gear. Hold on to the boat.



Creel Census Program

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans co-ordinates creel census studies to gather catch and effort statistics as well as biological data on game fish. Information such as numbers of hours fished, and number of fish caught is noted. This is being done as part of a continuing program to ensure viable sport fisheries in the North for future generations of anglers.

Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Ice Safety

The following guidelines do not override your obligation to use caution and common sense, and to **test the ice thickness before you travel on it.**

1. Right after freeze-up, ice toward the middle of the lake is thinner than that along the shoreline.
2. River ice and lake ice can vary in thickness throughout the winter and in different parts of the river or lake. Do not assume uniform ice thickness.
3. Ice thickness is not always an accurate measure of its strength. Crackage and sudden temperature drops can severely weaken ice.
4. Heavy snow cover insulates the ice, drastically reduces ice growth and can cause overflow.
5. Frequent and repetitive loading of the ice can drastically weaken ice.
6. Driving fast over thin ice can create a wave similar to a boat wake, which can crack the ice ahead of the vehicle under the right conditions.
7. Sudden braking or driving over a bump increases the effective weight of the vehicle and can cause ice failure. Drive carefully and slowly.
8. Stationary loading requires thicker ice than loads in motion on ice.
9. The following chart is the recommended minimum ice thickness for loads on sound ice:

Maximum Load	Minimum Ice Thickness
Person walking	.10 cm
Snowmobile	.15 cm
Light truck or car (1,600 kg)	.20 cm
Medium pickup (3,600 kg)	.30 cm
10,000 kg	.50 cm
20,000 kg	.71 cm
30,000 kg	.87 cm
40,000 kg	.100 cm
50,000 kg	.112 cm
60,000 kg	.122 cm

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a serious cooling of the body “core” caused by:

- immersion in cold water;
- overexposure to cold, wet or windy weather.

A person showing any of the following conditions could be suffering from hypothermia:

- uncontrollable shivering;
- difficulty speaking or thinking;
- irrational behaviour, stiffened muscles;
- unconsciousness, absence of reflexes.

To treat hypothermia, a source of heat must be provided. It is not enough to cover the victim with a blanket:

- Handle the victim **gently** – rewarming should be **gradual** – a sudden circulation of cold blood increases danger of heart failure – keep the victim still.
- Wet clothing need not be removed if you can provide the victim with good insulation, especially round the head and neck.
- Protect the victim from wind and donate your own body heat.
- Send someone for medical aid if possible.

Being prepared for the cold is the best protection from hypothermia:

- Let someone know where you have gone and when you expect to return.
- Stay dry.
- Dress warmly.
- Take a change of clothes – wool will keep you warm even when wet.
- In addition to a first aid kit, carry a basic survival kit which should include: waterproof matches, fishing line and hooks, dried soup, tea, snare wire and insect repellent.

Wilderness Use

Anglers should set an example as ethical resource users. When you are fishing near developed campgrounds or recreation areas, it is easy to maintain a clean environment by using facilities provided for garbage and campfires. When you are fishing in a wilderness area, leave the site as you found it, or clearer.

When you fly into a fishing area, pack your fish out whole.

Do not leave fish guts behind.

Garbage

Conservation of fish and wildlife habitat is important. Plastic wrappers, broken bottles, aluminum cans and cigarette butts quickly turn the wilderness into a junkyard. Garbage thrown over the side of your boat is unsightly, dangerous and illegal.

Discarded garbage can harm fish and wildlife. In wilderness areas, pack your garbage out with you – all of it.



Be Bear Aware

Three kinds of bears live in Nunavut: black, grizzly and polar. But a bear is a bear. They are curious, and usually in search of food. The following tips will help you to reduce encounters with a bear:

- Avoid areas where bears are evident.
- Look for tracks or droppings before making camp.
- Avoid locations where vegetation or terrain limit your view and might hide a bear.
- Do not sleep without a tent.
- Maintain areas for cooking, food storage, and cleaning fish about 200 metres (240 yards.) away from sleeping quarters.
- Latrines should also be some distance from sleeping areas.
- Keep a clean camp. Wash utensils and eliminate greasy smells which especially attract bears.
- Produce few food wastes and pack food in airtight containers, such as coolers, plastic pails with lids or heavy plastic bags.
- Do not let garbage accumulate.
- Elimination of odours is essential. Burn garbage completely in proper incineration systems. Pack out all garbage when you leave so it is not a danger to future campers.
- Do not leave camp alone. Watch for fresh tracks near camp.
- Never feed bears or other wildlife.

Reporting Fisheries Violations

Any assistance you may be able to give by reporting activities you feel are suspicious or are perhaps illegal is greatly appreciated. Contact the nearest office of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans at 867-979-8000, or Department of Environment at 867-975-7780 as soon as possible. Suspected fisheries violations may also be reported anonymously through the TIPS toll-free number: 1-800-222-TIPS. Provide as much information as you can about the situation including date and time, location, vehicle licence plate, air registration letters or boat registration number, and the nature of the incident.

Regulatory Amendments

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has initiated a process to create Nunavut Sport Fishery Regulations. Opportunities will be provided for consultation prior to the amendments being finalized.

Report All Spills

Spills of oil, chemicals or other hazardous materials must be reported immediately to the Nunavut 24-hour Spill Report Line at 867-920-8130 (collect calls accepted).

Government of Nunavut Wildlife Offices

Baffin

Arctic Bay	.....439-9945	Pangnirtung	.....473-8937
Clyde River	.....924-6235	Pond Inlet	.....899-8819
Grise Fiord	.....980-4164	Qikiqtarjuaq	.....927-8966
Igloolik	.....934-8999	Resolute Bay	.....252-3879
Iqaluit	.....975-7780	Sanikiluaq	.....266-8098
Kimmitut	.....939-2004	Sanirajak	.....928-8507
Kinngait	.....897-8932		

Kivalliq

Arviat	.....857-2975
Baker Lake	.....793-2944
Chesterfield Inlet	...898-9130
Coral Harbour	.....925-8823
Nauyasat	.....462-4002
Rankin Inlet	.....645-8084
Whale Cove	.....896-9189

Kitikmeot

Cambridge Bay	..983-4167
Gjoa Haven	....360-4630
Kugaaruk	.....769-7011
Kugluktuk	.....982-7450
Taloyoak561-6231

Government of Canada

Fishery Offices

Iqaluit867-979-8000
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