

Kentucky Proposes Live Fish Transportation Permit

To prevent introducing viral hemorrhagic septicemia into state waters, Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources proposed a permit system for transporting live fish, fish eggs, live bait and other aquatic organizations into, within or through the state, Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council reported.

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To prevent introducing viral hemorrhagic septicemia into state waters, Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources proposed a permit system for transporting live fish, fish eggs, live bait and other aquatic organizations into, within or through the state, Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council reported. The department will hold a public hearing in Frankfort, Ky., on the proposed regulation on Oct. 21 and will accept written comments through Oct. 31, 2008.

People wishing to attend the hearing must notify the department at least five days before the hearing date, because it might be canceled if no one plans to attend. [Click here](#) for more information about the hearing and proposal.

The proposed regulation exempts individuals transporting aquarium species, but it does not specifically exempt businesses or organizations transporting such species. The regulation defines aquarium species as "species of fish that are legally sold in the pet and ornamental trade business and does not include fish used in aquaculture, the bait industry or fish sold for stocking in Kentucky."

VHS, a reportable disease, possesses a high mortality rate and strikes many food and sport fish species, including salmon, trout, catfish, drum, bass, whitefish, perch, walleye, black crappie and bluegill, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The USDA has not identified VHS in ornamental fish, but it is concerned that baitfish, including cyprinids (the family including goldfish, koi and common carp), could be a source of disease introduction.

The Kentucky proposal would establish a fish transportation permit for individuals, corporations and other business entities that transport live aquatic organisms, including fish, bait and eggs, into, through or within Kentucky. It also calls for a live fish and bait dealer's license if the organisms will be sold to individuals, corporations and businesses in Kentucky or will be transported from Kentucky to be sold elsewhere.

Under the proposal, transported shipments must be disease-free. The proposal also regulates transportation tank water discharge practices. Additional documents would be required for transporting fish from VHS-positive states.