

MEMORANDUM**DATE:** August 8, 2008**TO:** Division of Shellfish Sanitation Staff**FROM:** Julie Ray, Plant Program Manager
Division of Shellfish Sanitation**THROUGH:** Robert E. Croonenberghs, Ph.D., Director
Division of Shellfish Sanitation**SUBJECT:** Plant policy, Issuance of certification numbers**Purpose**

Policy on issuance of certification numbers for pending shellfish and crab operations.

Policy

The Division of Shellfish Sanitation reserves a certification number for shellfish and crab plants before issuance of a *Certificate of Inspection*. This number is reserved so that plant owners may order product containers, heat shrink seals, shellstock tags, letterhead invoices and receipts for subsequent approval. These certification numbers are typically issued over the phone to the applicants. This process has recently led to some confusion by plant owners over whether they may then operate. When the field offices receive a request for certification, the shellfish specialist will call the Central Office to request a number. That number should no longer be given verbally to the applicant. In order to ensure that the applicants are properly informed of the purpose of issuing certification numbers before certification approval, the issuance of the following letters (Appendix A and B), by the shellfish specialists, will serve as reservation of the certification numbers. Copies of the letters are to be maintained in the perspective field offices and the Central Office.

Date

Applicant name
Address information

Re: Reservation of certification number

Dear Applicant,

Please be advised that the Virginia Department of Health Division of Shellfish Sanitation has reserved the certification number, VA _____, for your prospective shellfish operation located at _____.

Please be aware that proper shellstock tags, shellstock shipping containers, shucked product containers, heat shrink seals and other packaging materials (along with letterhead invoices/receipts) are an essential part of the requirements for the certification of your facility. A sufficient quantity of these items, which must include the certification number, must be provided and made available for inspection before certification and subsequent operation of the facility can be considered. This letter does not constitute certification. To avoid any misunderstanding, it should be made clear that you are not to shuck, pack or market shellfish until given approval for your *Certificate of Inspection*. Operation of the facility prior to certification by the Virginia Department of Health may result in prompt legal action and seizure of products.

Your consideration in this matter is solicited and greatly appreciated. For further assistance, please feel free to contact me at phone _____ in _____, Virginia.

Sincerely yours,

Shellfish Specialist

Cc: Richmond Office

Date

Applicant name
Address information

Re: Reservation of certification number

Dear Applicant,

Please be advised that the Virginia Department of Health Division of Shellfish Sanitation has reserved the certification number, VA _____, for your prospective crab processing operation located at _____.

You should be aware that proper product containers and other packaging materials (along with letterhead invoices/receipts) are an essential part of the requirements for the certification of your facility. A sufficient quantity of these pre-printed items, which must include the certification number, must be provided and made available for inspection before certification and subsequent operation of the facility can be considered. This letter does not constitute certification. To avoid any misunderstanding it should be made clear that you are not to pick, pack or market crabmeat until you have received your *Certificate of Inspection*. Operation of the facility prior to certification by the Virginia Department of Health may result in prompt legal action and seizure of products.

Your consideration in this matter is solicited and greatly appreciated. For further assistance, please feel free to contact me at _____ in _____, Virginia.

Sincerely yours,

Shellfish Specialist

Cc: Richmond Office