

## Oyster Gardening Quick Facts

- ★ Shellfish must be grown either at your own private pier or otherwise **in the riparian area** of the shoreline of **your** waterfront property
- ★ Shellfish grown must be in containers: floats, cages, etc.
- ★ Total area of containers may not exceed 160 square feet
- ★ Shellfish grown are for **noncommercial** purposes only - you may not sell any shellfish grown with an oyster gardening permit.
- ★ The oyster gardening permit is a free permit
- ★ If approved, the permit lasts for 5 years and then must be renewed



QUESTIONS ABOUT OYSTER GARDENING PERMITS?



**SAVANNAH LONGEST**

*Shellfish Aquaculture Specialist*

(757)247-2262



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## Oyster Gardening FAQ's

**Q: Can I be issued an oyster gardening permit if my growing area is in condemned water?**

A: Yes, the water quality status or quality classification of the water in the proposed growing area will not prevent you from obtaining an oyster gardening permit, **however**, you may not harvest oysters from condemned areas due to human health & safety concerns.

**Q: Can I grow oysters at a community pier or boat slip that I have access to?**

A: No, the VGP3 only authorizes waterfront property owners to install aquaculture structures at their own private property. If the proposed site is not your exclusive private property, you cannot install permanent aquaculture structures there.

**Q: Where can I obtain an application for an Oyster Gardening Permit?**

A: You can find the application on our website at:

<https://webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/public/habitat/gp3/> or by scanning the **QR Code**

Once submitted, the application will be processed and you will be notified via email upon completion.



**Q: How can I renew my permit after 5 years?**

A: Currently, the agency sends out reminders a couple of months before your permit expiration date along with an update form for you to fill out. You can fill this form out and send it back via email or by standard mail to the agency office.

## STEP 1:

- Go to: <https://webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/public/habitat/gp3/> or scan the QR code to find the application.
- Once you read the information, select "Continue to Application".



Virginia Marine Resources Commission VMRC Oyster Gardening Permit

### Application for Oyster Gardening Permit, Virginia General Permit #3

#### Abbreviated Joint Permit Application for Non-Commercial Riparian Shellfish Aquaculture Structures

**This application is intended to be used by persons applying for a permit to:**

- Deploy up to 160 square feet of aquaculture structures in the tidal waters of Virginia.
- For the noncommercial culture of shellfish.

**The Virginia Marine Resources Commission's General Permit #3 defines riparian shellfish gardening as:**

- The grow-out of native shellfish species, in protective structures such as floats, bags, cages, etc.
- Adjacent to a private, noncommercial pier or otherwise within a waterfront property owner's riparian area
- Exclusively for private, noncommercial purposes.

**The General Permit also specifies that the structures shall not adversely impact:**

- Navigation
- Existing stands of submerged aquatic vegetation.

**Application Process:**

- VMRC will forward copies of the application to the Health Department and your local Wetlands Board for their review. The Health Department may contact you regarding shellfish handling and harvesting procedures if your project is being conducted in polluted waters.
- If you do not believe your project will meet these requirements for the General Permit, you should complete the standard Joint Permit Application rather than the attached abbreviated form. You may obtain a standard Joint Permit Application here: <https://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/JPA.aspx>

**Need More Information:**

- Should you have any questions regarding this permit, please contact Savannah Longest at [Savannah.Longest@mrc.virginia.gov](mailto:Savannah.Longest@mrc.virginia.gov) or (757)247-2262.
- For additional information regarding this permit, please visit our website at [https://mrc.virginia.gov/Shellfish\\_Aquaculture.htm](https://mrc.virginia.gov/Shellfish_Aquaculture.htm)

[Continue To Application >>](#)

## STEP 2:

- This step of the application gathers your **contact information**.
- Items marked with a red asterisk are required.
- Once the form and reCAPTCHA is complete, click "Continue"

### Application for Oyster Gardening Permit, Virginia General Permit #3

**Step 1 of 5**

This application has five steps and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, please email [Savannah.Longest@mrc.virginia.gov](mailto:Savannah.Longest@mrc.virginia.gov) or call (757) 247-2262. Oyster Gardening Permits are free and valid for five years once approved. After entering the fields below, click the "Continue..." button to start your application.

First Name\*  Middle Initial  Last Name\*  Suffix

Email\*  Email Confirmation\*

Your email address is required to complete this application. Please re-type your email to ensure accuracy.

**Please Enter Your Mailing Address**

Street Address\*  Apt or Suite #

City\*  State (Abbreviation)\*  Zip Code\*

**Please Enter Your Phone Number and Complete the Captcha**

Phone Number\*  Cell Phone Carrier\*

Format: 757-123-4567. Provide Cell Number If Available.  I'm not a robot

[Continue >>](#)

## STEP 3:

- You will then be shown the screen below:

### VMRC Oyster Gardening Permit Application

Name: FRANK OYSTER  
Address: 123 OYSTER ROAD  
City, State Zip: OYSTER, VA 12345  
Email: frankoyster@email.com  
Application Number: 20241659

Thank you for completing step 1 of the application process. Your application number is 20241659. We have sent you an email to [frankoyster@email.com](mailto:frankoyster@email.com) that will provide instructions to allow you to complete your permit application. If you have not received this email, please check your spam folders and search your inbox for [frankoyster@email.com](mailto:frankoyster@email.com). If you still have not received this email, please email [Savannah.Longest@mrc.virginia.gov](mailto:Savannah.Longest@mrc.virginia.gov) with your application number requesting this email be re-sent or you may call the VMRC at (757) 247-2262.

[Please Print This Screen](#)

[Return to the Information Page](#)

- Go to your email to find an email like the one below and click where it shows your **application tracking number** to continue to fill out your application

### VMRC Oyster Gardening Permit Application

Dear FRANK OYSTER,

Thank you for verifying your email address. **Your permit application is not complete.** You must click on the link below and follow the onscreen instructions to complete your application. Your application tracking number is **20241659**

Please complete your application by clicking this link: [Complete Application: 20241659](#)

If you need assistance, please call the VMRC at (757) 247-2262. Please keep this email for your records.

## STEP 4:

- This portion of the application gathers information about your **project site** and the structures you wish to install.

### VMRC Oyster Gardening Permit Application

**Step 2 of 5**

Name: FRANK OYSTER  
Address: 123 OYSTER ROAD  
City, State Zip: OYSTER, VA 12345  
Email: frankoyster@email.com  
Application Number: 20241658

**Below information is specific to your aquaculture site and structures:**

**Please Enter Your Project Address**

Street Address of Aquaculture Site\*  Locality\*  Waterbody\*  Project Zip Code\*

**Describe Your Proposed Aquaculture Structures**

Types of Aquaculture Structures\*  Number of Structures\*  Structure Length in Feet\*  Structure Width in Feet\*

**How are Structures Secured**

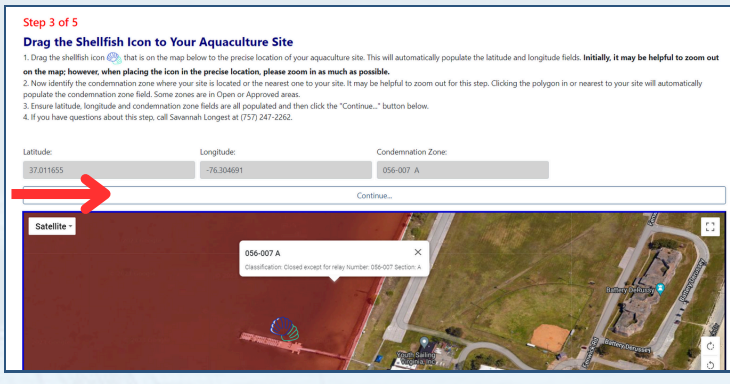
Manner Structures will be Secured\*  If Secured to bottom, describe manner below

[Continue >>](#)



## STEP 5:

- This portion of the application locates the coordinates of your project. The map should generate at your project address. Then, click on the shell icon and drag it to the exact location your structures will be placed. The coordinates will generate automatically.
- Next, click on the red area of the map to populate your VDH condemnation zone. This will also generate automatically.



## STEP 6:

- This portion of the application will ask you to acknowledge all of the statements below
- Click to select each and then "Continue"

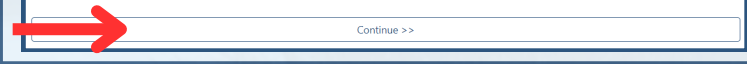
### VMRC Oyster Gardening Permit Application

#### Step 4 of 5

Name: FRANK OYSTER  
 Address: 123 OYSTER ROAD  
 City, State Zip: OYSTER, VA 12345  
 Email: frankoyster@email.com  
 Application Number: 20241658

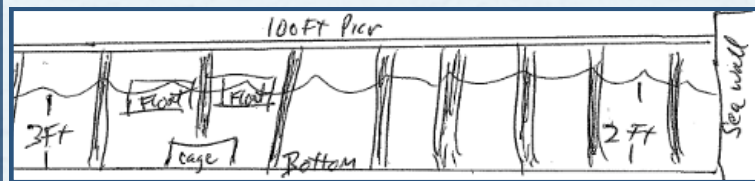
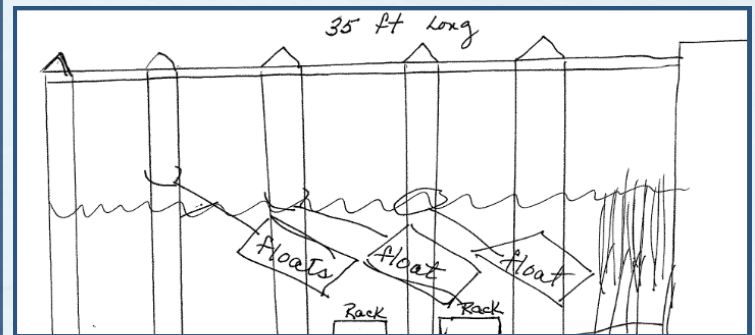
Please check the following statements indicating you understand and agree to the terms and conditions of this permit:

- I understand that this project is for noncommercial shellfish growing
- I will not harvest or consume oysters from condemned or contaminated water
- I understand that it is my responsibility to stay up-to-date with my VDH water quality zone
- I agree to allow the duly authorized representatives of any regulatory/advisory agency to enter upon the premises of the project site at reasonable times to inspect/photograph site conditions
- I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge
- I agree to be added to the VDH notification database and receive text and email alerts to changing shellfish condemnations in my area



## Example Cross Sectional Drawings

- If you are applying to secure cages to the bottom of your riparian area you will need to submit a cross-sectional drawing on step 5 of the application. Examples are below:



## STEP 7:

- This portion of the application gives you the option to upload additional documentation. **Necessary** if you are securing cages to the bottom of your riparian area. **Not necessary** if you are securing your cages to your existing private pier

### VMRC Oyster Gardening Permit Application

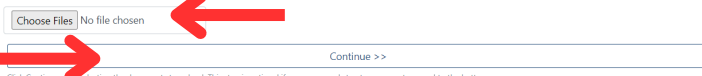
#### Step 5 of 5

Name: FRANK OYSTER  
 Address: 123 OYSTER ROAD  
 City, State Zip: OYSTER, VA 12345  
 Email: frankoyster@email.com  
 Application Number: 20241658

If your project involves the proposed structures being secured to the bottom of the riparian area of your property, please upload a cross sectional drawing. You may also upload any other documents you feel would be helpful in processing your application. Otherwise, click the "Continue..." button to complete your application.

#### Upload Additional Supporting Documentation In PDF or JPG Format

- Click the Choose Files (or Browse) button below to select the documents or images you wish to include in your application.
- After selecting the documents or images, click the continue button.
- You may take photos of your documents and upload the photos.
- If you have multiple documents, please press and hold the Ctrl key while selecting all your documents.
- All files must be in PDF or JPG format and have a file extension of .pdf, .jpg or .jpeg
- The name of the file cannot exceed 50 characters.
- Each document or image must be less than 10MB.
- The maximum number of documents you can upload is 4.



- Once you upload any documents, click continue to complete your application and you will receive a confirmation email.



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