

For more information  
on barotrauma & best  
fishing practices, visit:

*[www.wlf.la.gov/page/  
barotrauma](http://www.wlf.la.gov/page/barotrauma)*



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# REQUIRED

## VENTING TOOL OR DESCENDING DEVICE

### EFFECTIVE JANUARY 13, 2022

Requirement applies to all fishermen  
targeting reef fish in federal Gulf waters



[www.wlf.la.gov](http://www.wlf.la.gov)

## DESCEND Act requirements effective January 13, 2022



- WHAT:** Commercial, for-hire, and private recreational vessels fishing for reef fish species in Gulf of Mexico federal waters are required to have a venting tool or descending device rigged and ready to use.
- DESCENDING DEVICE:** An instrument designed to release fish at catch depth. *Example: weighted hook, lip clamp, holding box to lower fish to optimal depth.*
- VENTING TOOL:** A sharpened, hollow instrument to penetrate fish's abdomen to release excess gas in fish's abdomen. *Example: hypodermic syringe with plunger removed.*
- WHY:** To improve the survivorship of released reef fish suffering from barotrauma.
- WHEN:** Only use when a fish shows signs of barotrauma (distended abdomen, bulging eyes, everted stomach, or bubbling under scales).