

# Blue Crab Shedding

Water Source

## Water Source

Water source is an important factor to consider when choosing a site for recirculating shedding systems. Each water source has advantages and disadvantages and should be carefully considered before building a shedding system.

### Some questions to consider include:

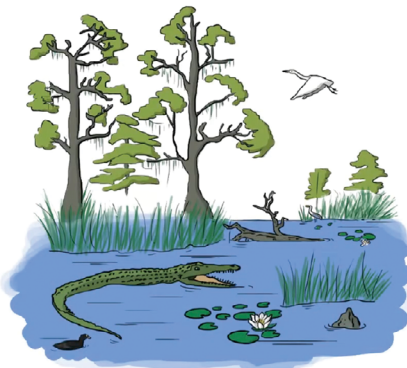
- How many water sources are available, and what is the capacity (like volume or flow rate) of each?
- How reliable is the water source, and how much does the source vary over time?
- Has a chemical water test been conducted on the water source to assess its compatibility with crab shedding?
- Are any permits necessary, such as for the volume usage or discharge?
- Where will you drain your system, and do you have the capacity for the volume of water?

### Water sources include:

- Wells
- Local waterways like rivers, streams, bayous, ponds and lakes
- Municipal water



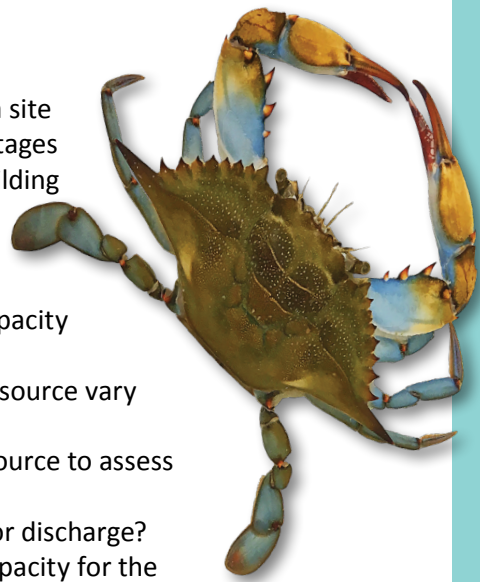
Wells



Rivers, streams, bayous, ponds and lakes



Municipal water



Well water concerns: Dissolved gasses include carbon dioxide, nitrogen, methane and hydrogen sulfide. Contaminants include pesticides, organic matter, sediments and metals.

Chlorine can be removed by aerating the water. Chloramine will require a chemical remover like sodium thiosulfate or other commercial products available.



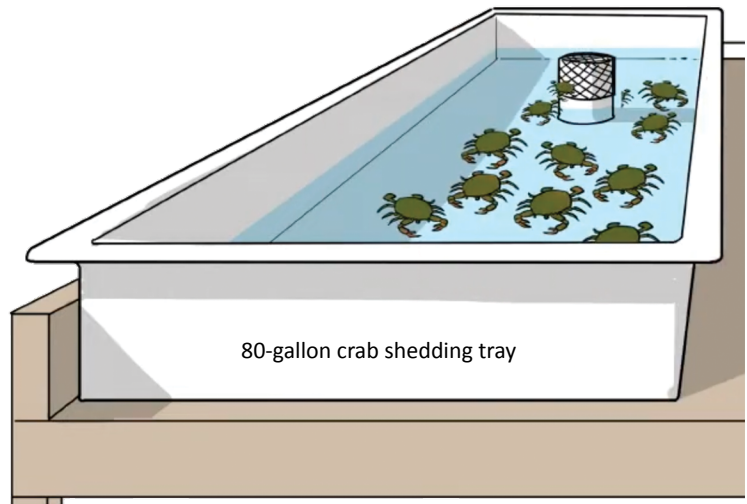
Well water should be tested for contaminants. If dissolved gasses are present, they can be removed easily through aeration.

Local waterways are a readily available and inexpensive water source. However, they can contain high levels of contaminants, nutrients, parasites and nuisance organisms like algae that can be detrimental to crab health. Algae can clog your shedding system. Often, this water needs to be treated to prevent issues with parasites or algae. Salinity might also need to be adjusted to reach the target range by adding more freshwater or adding salt.

Municipal water is a high-quality water source. However, municipal water is expensive and often contains chlorine, or chloramine in more rural areas, which is toxic to crabs and the bacteria in the biofilter. Aeration or a chemical chlorine remover can be used to get rid of the chlorine. A chlorine water quality test is highly recommended if municipal water is used in a shedding system.

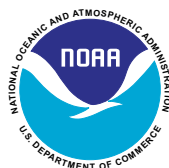


Water testing strips. Some will test for chlorine or chloramine.



A traditional shedding tray (three-foot by eight-foot) holds approximately 80 gallons of water. Additional water will be needed depending upon the number of trays in the system and the holding capacity of the sump. Knowing the approximated volume of water needed within your recirculating system can help determine a water source.

For more information on preparing water, see the video [www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5EAYfxJyWA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5EAYfxJyWA) or the preparing water fact sheet.



[laseagrant.org/outreach/projects/soft-shell-crab/](http://laseagrant.org/outreach/projects/soft-shell-crab/)

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