

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LICENSING AND REGISTRATION SERVICE
CLAIM FOR ABANDONED VESSEL

An abandoned vessel as defined at Natural Resources Article, §8-721(a), Annotated Code of Maryland has remained at a location without the consent of the owner or person in control of the property:

- More than 30 days
 - Private dock
 - At or near water's edge on private property
- More than 60 days (effective July 1, 2020)
 - Private marina or property operated by a private marina
 - Private boatyard or property operated by a private boatyard
- More than 180 days
 - Private property other than those properties described above.

NOTE: §§16-201–16-207 (Mechanic's Lien) of the Maryland Commercial Law Article must be followed to settle the unpaid account for a vessel left in your care for more than 30 days for repairs, storage, dockage, parts, accessories, etc.

A vessel that is currently United States Coast Guard (USCG) documented with an unsatisfied lien, must follow USCG process to claim ownership. Ownership transfer and release of a mortgage must be authorized by USCG before Maryland title can be issued.

§8-722 sets forth the following process to acquire title to an abandoned vessel:

STEP 1 -- Using boat number or hull identification number, determine owner's last known address and lien information (obtained from State boat licensing agency where last registered, identified by the first 2 letters of boat number).

- Send a registered letter, return receipt requested, to the last known address of both the owner and the lien holder (when applicable). A copy of this letter will be needed for Step 3.
 - Letter should advise that if ownership is not claimed and vessel removed within 30 days, title will be claimed through the abandoned boat law
 - If owner or lien holder cannot be determined, no letter is required.

STEP 2 – Place a notice in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county where the vessel is located. Notice must include:

- Vessel description and location
- Any identifying numbers
- Statement -- if vessel is not claimed within 30 days of publication date, applicant will seek title

STEP 3 – 30 days after publication, application for title can be processed through the Department upon submission of the following items:

- Completed DNR Form B-240 and DNR Form B-117
- Proof of owner notification
 - Owner has been identified
 - Original signed registered letter receipt, or
 - Returned envelope marked "Undeliverable" by the Post Office and a copy of the letter.
 - If you were unable to identify the owner, a written explanation of your attempts to locate the boat owner and lien holder.
- If you are not the owner of the land, owner's written authorization for you to claim the vessel as abandoned and to receive title in your name.
- Original Certificate of Publication for legal notice issued by the newspaper
- Clear photographs of the vessel (showing existing boat #, if applicable).
- Tracing of the vessel's hull identification number or serial number

Pursuant to §8-716(c)(1) of Maryland's State Boat Act, **5% VESSEL EXCISE TAX** will be assessed on the fair market value as shown in a national publication of used vessel values adopted by the Department – the BUC Book. The Department may adjust the fair market value based on the condition of the vessel (proof required) or upon presentation of a marine survey.

SAMPLE NEWSPAPER AD (must be in Legal Notices Section)

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has apparently been abandoned for (30, 60 or 180, whichever applies) days on the property of: (Give name, address and telephone #). The vessel is described as: (boat registration number, hull identification number, vessel name, builder, length, color). Application for title will be made in accordance with Section 8-722 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article if this vessel is not claimed and removed from the above property within 30 days of this notice.

SAMPLE LETTER

(must also be sent to the person who left the boat on the property
if different from the last registered owner)

Date:

Name

Address

Dear _____:

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has been abandoned for more than (30, 60 or 180, whichever applies) days on the property of: (Give name, address and telephone #)

The vessel is described as: (boat registration number, hull identification number, vessel name, builder, length, color).

Application for title will be made in accordance with Section 8-722 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article if this vessel is not claimed and removed from the above property within 30 days of this notice.

Sincerely,

DNR Service Centers

Annapolis Service Center
160 Harry S Truman Pkwy.
PO Box 1869
Annapolis, MD 21404
(410) 260-3220
1-866-344-8889 Toll-Free

Salisbury Service Center
251 Tilghman Rd. Rm #2
Salisbury, MD 21804
(410) 713-3840
1-866-812-1678 Toll-Free

Bel Air Service Center
501 West MacPhail Rd. #2
Bel Air, MD 21014
(410) 836-4550
1-866-623-3187 Toll-Free

Frederick Service Center
1601-A Bowmans Farm Rd.
Frederick, MD 21701
(240) 236-9950
1-866-679-0906 Toll Free

Solomons Service Center
14175 Solomons Island Rd South
Solomons, MD 20688
(410) 535-3382
1-866-688-3823 Toll Free

Centreville Service Center
120 Broadway Ave. Suite 5&6
Centreville, MD 21617
(410) 819-4100
1-866-439-1708 Toll-Free

Cumberland Service Center
13300 Winchester Road
Cumberland, MD 21502
(301) 777-2134
Open Tues/Thurs
NO MAIL accepted at this location