

Marine and Road Flares Disposal

Marine and road flares can be a problem to dispose of when outdated or no longer needed. Since flares are not accepted at household hazardous products collections and should not be thrown in household trash, what is the best method of disposal?

Residents of all Cape Cod towns can make arrangements to dispose of marine and boat flares through town fire departments, recycling centers or departments of public works.

By Federal law, each recreational boat 16 feet and over must carry Visual Distress Signals (VDS). Currently, the only United States Coast Guard (USCG) approved VDS are pyrotechnic flares. All flares must have a clearly marked expiration date, which is 42 months past the date of manufacture. Recreational boaters are required to have a minimum of three “in-date” flares on board. Therefore,



every three and a half years, boaters must purchase new flares to replace their out-of-date flares.

It is against the law to set off flares in a *non-emergency situation* (unless special arrangements are made with the USCG and local fire department). The Coast Guard does not recommend keeping out-of-date flares on board for emergencies.

With an estimated 250,000 out-of-date flares generated annually by boaters in Massachusetts, it is essential that flares be safely disposed of at town collection locations.

Harwich Residents Recycle Marine & Road Flares at the:

Harwich Fire Department

175 Sisson Road

8 am-4 pm every day

508-430-7546 Speak with Captain before bringing flares into station.



Barnstable County
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS PROGRAM
in cooperation with the University of Massachusetts Extension
800-319-2783 508-375-6699



Barnstable County
Fire Training Academy



Cape Cod Cooperative Extension
www.capecodextension.org
508-375-6690