

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

Essex Service Center  
1338 Eastern Blvd. A  
Essex, MD 21221  
(667) 401-0760  
Open Mon/Wed/Fri  
NO MAIL accepted at this location