



DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES
BOAT REGISTRATION AND TITLING SECTION
4010 WEST BROAD ST., P.O. BOX 11528
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23230
(804)-367-6135

PROCEDURE TO ACQUIRE WATERCRAFT REGISTRATION/TITLE ON AN ABANDONED VESSEL

In order for a boat to be considered “abandoned”, it must have been abandoned on the applicant’s property or water immediately adjacent to his/her property for a period of 60 DAYS.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If the boat has a registration number assigned by Virginia, or any other state, you must notify the last registered owner(s) and lienholder(s) according to that state’s official records by certified letter that if ownership is not claimed and the boat removed within 30 days, you will apply to the Department for Watercraft Registration/Title in your name (letter attached).
2. If there is no means to identify the owner(s), you must make a good faith effort to notify the rightful owner and document your efforts of such attempt.
3. Place a notice, to appear for three consecutive issues in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county or city where the boat is located. This notice must accurately describe the boat, its location, and any identifying numbers. The notice must also state that if the boat is not claimed and removed within 30 days, you will apply to the Department for registration/title in your name (sample advertisement notice attached).
4. At the end of the 30-day period, you may apply to the Department for title/registration. The **boat application and appropriate fees** must be accompanied by the following:
 - a. The attached Affidavit for Abandoned Boat completed and notarized.
 - b. Proof that the certified letter(s) was mailed at least 30 days prior to the application. Attach the unopened undeliverable letter if returned by the post office, or attach the green return post card from the post office showing the signature of the recipient and the date of receipt.
 - c. A copy of the letter that was mailed to the previous owner(s).
 - d. A detailed explanation of the steps taken to identify the owner(s) and lienholder if the boat shows no identifying numbers.
 - e. Proof that a notice was printed in a newspaper of general circulation for three consecutive issues.
 - f. A copy of the out-of-state registration (if applicable) proving to whom the boat was registered or titled.
 - g. Any response received from the previous owner(s).
 - h. A completed Application for Watercraft Certificate of Title & Certificate of Number (registration)
 - i. Please allow 30-60 days for processing

Upon receipt by the Department of all items required and after all fees and taxes due have been paid, the Department shall then issue title/registration in the applicant’s name.

All cost incurred in obtaining title/registration to a boat shall be borne by the applicant.



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ABANDONED BOAT AFFIDAVIT

I/we affirm that I/we have complied with the provisions of Section 29.1-733.1 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, in regard to the boat described below. I/we hereby submit the following to obtain a Virginia Watercraft Registration/Title for this boat, which was abandoned on my/our property or in the water immediately adjacent to my/our property for a period of **AT LEAST 60 DAYS**.

City/County where the boat is located _____

Make of Boat _____ Year built _____ Length _____

Hull ID Number _____ Boat Number _____

Attached is the following documentation pursuant to Section 29.1-733.1 of the Code of Virginia to support the issuance of a new watercraft registration/title to the above-described watercraft:

1. The receipts with signatures for the certified letter(s) which notified the owner(s) and lienholder(s) of the location of the boat and of my/our intention to apply for Virginia Watercraft Registration/Title if the boat is unclaimed after 30 days notice (If the Post Office returns the notifications undelivered, attach those unopened letters to this form).
2. A copy of the letters that were sent to the last registered owner(s) and lienholder.
3. A detailed explanation of the steps taken to identify the owner and lienholder if the owners could not be determined.
4. A copy of the notice that was published in _____ (Newspaper) on _____, _____, and _____.
5. Any response that was received from the last registered/titled owner(s).

 Printed name of Applicant

 Signature of Applicant

 Printed name of Applicant

 Signature of Applicant

STATE OF VIRGINIA City/County of _____:

On this _____ day of _____, 20____ before me personally appeared the affiant(s) signing above, acknowledged and made oath that the matters set forth in the foregoing affidavit are true.

X

 Notary Public

 My Commission Expires

An Application for Certificate of Title must accompany this form.

THIS LETTER IS TO BE DELIVERED VIA CERTIFIED MAIL TO THE LAST REGISTERED OWNER (S) AND LIENHOLDER ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE STATE OF REGISTRATION AT LEAST 30 DAYS PRIOR TO APPLICATION FOR TITLE AND REGISTRATION.

Date: _____

Registered/Titled Owner's Name and Address:

Dear _____:

According to the records of the Commonwealth/State of _____, you
(State of Registration)
are the last registered owner for a _____ with hull
(Model year) (Make of vessel)
identification number _____ and registration number _____
(Hull Identification Number) (Registration Number).
which has been abandoned on my/our property for at least 60 DAYS.

If this vessel is not removed from my/our property within 30 days of the receipt of this letter, I/we will make application for Watercraft Registration/Title to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries as is provided for in 29.1-733.1 of the Code of Virginia.

If you wish to claim ownership of this vessel, please contact either me/us and/or the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries by certified letter as soon as possible at the addresses given below:

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
Boat Section
PO Box 11528
Richmond, VA 23230

(Your name and Mailing Address)

Sincerely,

(Your Signature)

SAMPLE AD TO BE PLACED IN NEWSPAPER

NOTICE

ABANDONED VESSEL

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of: (List name, address, and telephone number).

Description of vessel

Make, length, year built, color and any identifying numbers

Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with Section 29.1-733.1 of the Code of Virginia if this vessel is not claimed and removed within 30 days of first publication of this notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries with questions.



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The person in possession of the abandon boat may apply for title and registration in his name by submitting to the Department the following:

- Application for Certificate of Title and Certificate of Number completed with the appropriate fees.
- Abandoned Boat Affidavit completed and notarized.
- A copy of the vessel registration record from the last state the vessel was registered/titled if applicable.
- If the vessel was documented with the U S Coast Guard, a copy of Abstract of Title.
- The newspaper advertisement in the correct format and evidence of the ad running for 3 (three) consecutive issues.
- A copy of the letter(s) mailed to the previous owner(s) of record and lien holder at the addresses specified on record.
- Copies of the return receipts for the certified letters OR
- The unopened letter marked as “Undeliverable” by the Post Office.
- Copies of any response from the last registered/titled owner(s)

Please allow 30-60 days for processing