

The Department, by rule or regulation, for the period it prescribes may exempt any vessel or class of vessels from the numbering provisions of this subtitle if the vessel or class of vessels is exempted from the federal numbering requirements by statute, or rule or regulation.

(b) The owner of any vessel to be numbered by this subtitle shall file an application for a certificate of number with the Department. The application is on forms the Department approves, accompanied by the requisite fee, and signed by every vessel owner.

(c) (1) The annual fee for each certificate of boat number is \$12 for the calendar year in which the certificate is issued. However, any vessel 16 feet in length, or less, equipped with a 7 1/2 horsepower motor, or less, is exempt from this fee. The fee to replace a lost, destroyed, or corrected certificate is \$2. The Department shall record any transaction or transfer of numbered boats. It may record any amount of money owing on a vessel required to be numbered at the time of sale. The Department may not effect a transfer of ownership until the amount of money owed as shown on the records of the Department is fully paid or recorded on the new title. Any vessel that is required to be numbered under this section that is exempt prior to January 1, 1974, shall be exempt from payment of this title tax.

(2) Emergency rescue boats that belong to fire departments or rescue squads in Maryland shall be exempt from all registration fees, but shall apply for a registration renewal every 3 years.

(d) Upon receipt of the application in approved form, the Department shall issue to the applicant a certificate of boat number which shall contain the boat number issued to the vessel and additional information the Department prescribes by rule or regulation. The certificate of boat number shall be pocket size and shall be available for inspection when the vessel is in use. The owner shall paint on or attach the boat number to each side of the forward half of the vessel's hull or superstructure for which it is issued, displaying it in the manner required by the Department rules or regulations and maintaining it in legible condition.

(e) If a vessel required to be numbered under this subtitle is sold, transferred, abandoned, lost, stolen, or destroyed, its certificate expires at the time of the sale, transfer, abandonment, loss, theft, or destruction and then is invalid.

(f) There is a \$5 service charge for every check returned unpaid.

(g) Each year the Department shall inform each holder of a certificate of boat number of the manner in which the boat owner may obtain a current copy of the U. S. Coast Guard rules and regulations applicable to the type of boat registered under his boat number.