



MARINE FLARE FACTSHEET

What Are Marine Flares?

A visual distress signal (VDS) is used to summon help on a boat and should only be displayed if there is immediate or potential danger.

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) requires that all boaters operating on certain waterways to comply with USCG requirements to carry either:

- 3 day and night pyrotechnic devices
- 1 daytime and 1 night-time non-pyrotechnic device
- Combination of both previous options

Failure to have flares (or having expired flares) could result in a \$1,100 fine.



Issues with Single-Use Marine Flares:

Contain toxic metals and pollutants, such as perchlorate, which have negative impacts on human and environmental health.

Expire 36 - 42 months after manufacturing and require special handling.

California lacks safe and permanent disposal option for these flares.

Proper disposal of marine flares costs local government thousands of dollars.



Benefits of Electronic Visual Distress Signal Devices (eVDSDs):

Reusable, which allows it to be tested before leaving shore and saves money as it doesn't need to be repurchased.

Battery operated and can run for up to 60 hours.

Waterproof and includes floatation so can easily be picked up if dropped overboard.

Easy to operate, and family friendly.

USCG-approved and visible up to 10 nautical miles.

Learn More

Scan the QR code to learn more about how to properly dispose of your expired marine flares and how to obtain free or discounted eVDSDs!



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www.calpsc.org/marineflareswitchcampaign



MARINE FLARE

Q&A

How do You Properly Dispose of Pyrotechnic Marine Flares?

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) classifies pyrotechnic flares as hazardous waste, as they are toxic, reactive, and ignitable. Therefore, they cannot be disposed of in the regular trash. Pyrotechnic flares must be properly disposed of at a hazardous waste facility permitted by the EPA to manage explosives. There are only three permitted facilities in the entire U.S. that take explosive waste (UT, LA, and MO). Contact your local household hazardous waste facility or visit www.calpsc.org/marineflareswitchcampaign to see what disposal options are available near you.

What is the Best Way to Learn About Marine Flare Collection Events?

Visit www.calpsc.org/marineflareswitchcampaign and join the marine flare listserv to get notified about marine flare collection events across California!

What Prevents the eVDSDs from Becoming Corroded/Unusable?

Salt water, salty air, and humidity can cause corrosion. The Sirius Signal eVDSDs are manufactured to prevent moisture from entering the device. For eVDSDs that operate on alkaline batteries, it is recommended to remove the batteries during the off season to prevent leakage. Batteries should be replaced annually. Most importantly, eVDSD can be tested before venturing out on the water, which cannot be done with a pyrotechnic flare.

How Visible are the eVDSDs Compared to a Aerial Flare?

No single visual distress signal is perfect for all situations. It is always best to have options. While an aerial flare can reach 150 feet when fired, they are only visible for a few seconds - making it hard to pinpoint a location. Comparatively, an eVDSD is visible up to 10 nautical miles and can last for hours. This allows more time for first responders to get an accurate location.

How Visible are eVDSDs During the Daytime?

eVDSDs are only USCG-approved for nighttime use on their own. eVDSDs are packaged with a daytime orange distress flag and a whistle to meet USCG's daytime signal and audible signal requirements.

In Collaboration with:

Program designed & implemented by:



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