

# Marine Debris Reduction Strategies in Maryland



Mid-Atlantic Marine Debris Summit  
Donna Morrow

Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
Chesapeake and Coastal Service

# Efforts in Maryland



- Micro-bead ban (2015)
- Polystyrene foam food containers ban (2019)
- Keep Maryland Beautiful grants
- Maryland Litter Policy
- SHA “Adopt a Highway” program
- Marine Debris Advisory Team to Coastal Zone Management Program (2019)
- **Abandoned Boats and Debris program**
- **Shrink Wrap Recycling Project**

# Abandoned Boat and Debris Program



- Reimbursable grants and expertise to assist public agencies in the removal of **abandoned boats and debris** from state waters. Funded by **Maryland's Waterway Improvement Fund**
- Only authorized public entities in Maryland with ownership, management or jurisdiction over the aquatic lands where the vessel or hazardous debris is located may apply for grants
- \$25,000 annual limit per jurisdiction

# Maryland's Waterway Improvement Fund



- Funded by boaters via 5% excise fee when boat titled in Maryland
- Funds improvements that *benefit the boating public* such as aids to navigation, dredging, public boat ramps, fire/rescue boats, debris removal, and boating information and education
- Established by legislature in 1966
- Since its inception, Waterway Improvement Fund has provided more than \$300 million for 4,500 projects at more than 300 public boating access sites

# Abandoned Boat Definition



“A vessel that has remained at a location without the owner or person in control of the property’s consent:

- More than 30 days on public property, including public marinas, docks, or boatyards
- More than 30 days at a private dock or near water’s edge on private property
- More than 90 days at a private marina or boatyard or property operated by a private marina or boatyard

More than 180 days at private property

# Vessels Removed



2011	19
2012	22
2013	22
2014	19
2015	16
2016	23
2017	26
2018	27



# Debris Removal



- Debris that *poses a hazard to navigation or limits access to a public boating access facility or a shipping channel* is eligible for removal
- Grants provided to municipalities
- Following severe weather DNR will directly remove debris with our equipment and personnel in addition to



# Shrink Wrap Recycling

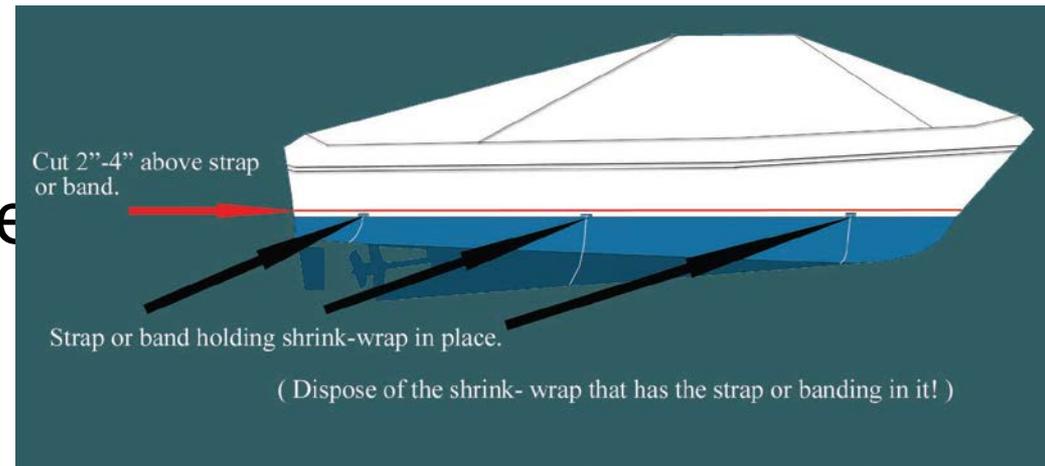


- Approximately 178,000 recreational boats registered in Maryland
- Large numbers of boaters use shrink wrap each winter to protect their boats
- Not a demonstrated contributor of marine debris but wasteful and recyclable
- Copied project model from

# 2019 Pilot Shrink Wrap Project



- Sell bags for \$15 that hold wrap from a medium size boat
- Special instructions to remove wrap to be recyclable
- Bags collected by Chesapeake Materials for transport and recycling



# 2019 Pilot Results

- 29 Marinas participated
- Over 850 boats
- Approximately 30,000 pounds of plastic kept from the landfill
- Plan to repeat and expand in 2020



# Future Direction

- Microplastics and marine debris are emerging issues in Chesapeake Bay restoration work
- Following current research and data to inform future efforts and funding decisions
- Maryland Marine Debris Advisory Team—Advising our Chesapeake and Coastal Service



Donna Morrow

[Donna.morrow@Maryland.gov](mailto:Donna.morrow@Maryland.gov)

[Dnr.Maryland.gov/CCS](http://Dnr.Maryland.gov/CCS)