



North Carolina Vessel Registration & Titling Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What vessels require registration?

A: All motorized vessels used on public waters including vessels which use an electric trolling motor must be registered. This requirement also includes jet skis.

All US Coast Guard Documented Vessels operating in North Carolina for over 90 consecutive days must be registered.

All sailboats used on public waters must be registered if longer than 14 feet at the load waterline.

If a vessel registered in another state is brought into North Carolina for over 90 consecutive days, the registration must be transferred to North Carolina. Active duty military, temporarily stationed in North Carolina, who have a valid out of state registration for their vessel are exempt from this requirement.

All titled vessels must be registered.

Q: What vessels are exempt from registration?

A: Vessels that are unused and kept on dry land do not need registration in North Carolina.

Rowboats, canoes, kayaks, and rafts moved only by oars, paddles, or the current do not need registration in North Carolina.

A vessel used only on a private pond does not need registration in North Carolina.

Ship's lifeboats or dinghies do not need to be registered if they are used only for emergency lifeboat purposes. However, if they are motorized and used for non-emergency purposes, they do require registration.

Q: What vessels are required to be titled?

A: Anyone who purchases or transfers a motorized vessel or sailboat 14 feet or longer or who owns a personal watercraft (jet ski) is required to title the vessel.

Any vessel with an active lien is required to be titled. Titles are held by the lienholder until which time the lien has been satisfied.

Q: What is the cost to register and title a vessel?

A: Cost varies depending on the size of the vessel and the services requested. Refer to the [VL-1 Form](#) for a list of vessel registration and titling fees.

Q: Where can I register and title my vessel?

A: At select [wildlife service agents](#) throughout the state, by mail using a [VL-1 Form](#) or at NCWRC headquarters in Raleigh.

Q: How do I obtain a replacement title?

A: Complete the [Vessel Title Request Form](#) and mail to NCWRC along with the appropriate fee.

Q: Can I register and title a vessel which has been abandoned on my property?

A: Yes, however you must comply with the procedures outlined in the [Taking Ownership of an Abandoned Vessel](#) document.

Q: I am interested in selling my vessel, what documentation do I need to provide the buyer?

A: If your vessel is titled, you must provide the buyer with the Certificate of Title, signed and notarized by all owners listed on the title.

If your vessel is not titled, you must provide the buyer with a [Bill of Sale](#), signed and notarized by all owners listed on the registration.

The buyer cannot register the vessel without one of these notarized documents.

Q: I sold my vessel, moved out of state, or junked an old boat, now what?

A: You need to notify NCWRC in writing as soon as possible to ensure your vessel record reflects a "sold", "out of state", or "junked" status. This step is important because it will show you are no longer the registered owner or that you no longer live in North Carolina .

You may notify our office using one of the below methods. It is important to include the following information on your request: 1) reason for the request; 2) vessel registration number (i.e. NC 1234 AA); 3) name(s) and address as shown on the vessel registration card; and 4) a daytime telephone number where you can be reached.

- Email: vessels@ncwildlife.org
- Fax: 919-707-0293
- Mail: NCWRC, 1709 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-1709