

Nonprofit Organization Grants:

Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety
Recreational Boating Safety

Federal Grant Title: National Non-Profit Organization Grant Program
Federal Agency: United States Coast Guard
Funding Opportunity Number: DHS-USCG-2021-001
Type of Funding: Cooperative Agreement
CFDA Numbers: 97.012
CFDA Descriptions: Boating Safety Financial Assistance

Grantee: Sea Tow Foundation
Grant Number: 3321FAN201120
Grant Title: Sea Tow Foundation eVDS Education and Awareness Program
Period of Performance: 1 year grant

Award Amount: \$75,000.00

Summary:

Boaters in many locations across the country are required to carry a minimum of three day and three night-time Visual Distress Signals (VDS) that are U.S. Coast Guard-approved. The majority of boaters carry pyrotechnic signaling devices known as flares because they are inexpensive and easy to find in most boating-related stores. A major problem with flares is that they expire within 42 months of manufacturing and then must be replaced to meet USCG carriage requirements this creates the issue of how to safely dispose of expired flares. This is an ongoing issue thankfully, there is a safe, approved, and affordable solution for boaters known as the Electronic Visual Distress Signal (eVDS).

The eVDS Education and Awareness Program will educate boaters on eVDS and encourage them to switch from flares to eVDS. This will be accomplished in a number of methods across multiple channels such as printed posters that can be displayed where boaters shop for supplies, printed brochures that can be distributed by boat dealers and at in-person events when they can be safely held, social media posts and contests, digital advertising, producing a series of short videos explaining how to find and use eVDS devices, and a website to serve as a resource for more in-depth information on the eVDS devices including how to identify signals of others in distress. The Sea Tow Foundation will work with our for-profit and non-profit partners around the country to further promote the eVDS Education and Awareness Program at their businesses and during their interactions with boaters both in person and online.

<https://www.boatingsafety.com/>