

Use of Public Moorings

01/14/05

The Town policy on all mooring assignments shall be fair, open and equal to all. The Town of Chatham Harbormaster is responsible for the assignment of all mooring locations within the community's salt and fresh waters. Any vessel owner/operator that wishes to anchor, moor or dock in Chatham, must first obtain permission from the Harbormaster.

The Town of Chatham maintains a number of moorings located throughout the community for a variety of uses including but not limited to the following:

- 1) Transient commercial vessels
- 2) Transient recreational vessels
- 3) Corps of Engineers / U.S. Coast Guard use
- 4) Used by town-owned vessels
- 5) Berthing for towed/disabled vessels
- 6) Occasional use by boatyards
- 7) Barnstable County dredge use
- 8) Use by vessels during storms

A portion of the town-owned moorings are reserved to provide safe legal moorage for those vessels that must re-locate from one side of the community to the other. This is required in order to give commercial fishermen and other mariners the flexibility the need when fishing in the variety of areas offshore. Bar (Chatham break) conditions during various times of the year are poor enough that fishermen may need to relocate to Stage Harbor or they may be fishing in areas offshore that make Stage Harbor more desirable place to moor. During those times when these moorings are not being used or reserved by resident commercial or recreational vessels, they may be used by others who require moorage. These individuals may be transient commercial/recreational vessels from other ports that wish to fish from here or visit for a limited period of time. No town moorings may be used, leased, or rented on a permanent basis.

When requests for the use of town-owned moorings are received by the Harbormaster, a number of factors are considered, but are not limited to the following:

1. Does the vessel constitute an unnecessary risk to public safety or any environmental concerns? Are the vessel owners and/or operator willing to adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations pertaining to waterways, docks, piers, the environment, public safety and public order.
2. Physical: Suitability of vessel to the mooring requested, availability of mooring, swing room of vessel for area, ground tackle, etc.
3. Environmental: Is the vessel satisfactorily equipped with a marine sanitation device (for overnight stays), are the vessel bilges clean and free of toxic substances, are all automatic bilge pumps in the manual position.

4. Seasonal: During the summer when our mooring fields are most heavily used by commercial, recreational vessels, including transient tuna and scallop fishing vessels, demand for transient moorings are at their peak.
5. In place of using Town moorings, are there appropriate rentals or third party use moorings that may be available.
6. At certain times of the year (Summer and Fall), some requests are for extended periods of time and if granted, may unfairly deny attempts by others the availability of that mooring.
7. Boat owners/operators who continually resist the communities' use of the mooring or harbor guidelines and regulations may affect our decision on Town mooring use and other private mooring use.