



The COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
BOARD OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114
Tel. (617) 626-1200
www.mass.gov/orgs/board-of-underwater-archaeological-resources

POLICY GUIDANCE ON THE DISCOVERY OF UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE AND MUNITIONS

Introduction

The Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources (BUAR) is the state agency charged with the identification, preservation and protection of underwater archaeological resources. BUAR recognizes that despite intensive background research, remote sensing surveys, and field investigations, it is possible that unexploded ordnance and munitions may still be discovered during the course of permitted and non-permitted activities on or below state lands under water, particularly during excavation. BUAR procedures that should be followed in the event that suspected ordnance or munitions are inadvertently discovered during the permitted and non-permitted activities are outlined below.

Procedures

Generally, the possibility of encountering unexploded ordnance and munitions is not anticipated when conducting background research, remote sensing surveys, or field investigations of shipwrecks or other underwater archaeological resources. However, there were a number of military installations (e.g., forts, gun batteries, etc.), target ranges (e.g., S.S. *Longstreet*, Nomans Land Island, etc.), disposal sites, and vessels (e.g., naval, armed merchant, cargo, etc.) which may contain these materials.

This guidance covers all types of munitions as they remain potentially dangerous even when they have been buried or submerged for many years.

If suspected unexploded ordnance or munitions are located within the waters of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the following procedures should be followed by BUAR permittees, project proponents, and/or others.

1. RECOGNIZE - Recognize that you may have encountered munitions or other ordnance.

In the event that suspected ordnance or munitions are encountered, **immediately** halt any activity that might affect those remains. Leave suspected munitions in place. Remember, munitions are inherently dangerous and designed to kill.

2. RETREAT - Retreat to a safe distance away from the munitions or other ordnance.

In the event that suspected ordnance or munitions are encountered, jettison or secure it and keep staff and crew out of the immediate area. Do not bring suspected munitions on board vessels or into port, unless specifically directed to do so. Mark the location and move from the immediate vicinity.

For BUAR permits and projects, the Project Director and, if applicable, the Project Archaeologist will be informed and notified of the exact location of these remains.

3. REPORT – **Immediately** notify the appropriate authorities of the munitions location and provide a description. For BUAR permits and projects, the Project Archaeologist and the Project Director will be responsible for immediately notifying the requisite authorities.

At sea, on the vessel, or on site: Contact the United States Coast Guard (USCG) on Channel 16 (156.800 MHz)

In port: Call 911 to notify USCG, local police and the State Police Bomb Squad (508) 820-2121.

At onshore facilities: Call 911 to notify the local police and the State Police Bomb Squad at (508)-820-2121.

The USCG and the State Police Bomb Squad have specific protocols to deal with munitions and other unexploded ordnance. Follow their instructions.

BUAR permittees will also need to contact the BUAR and the Massachusetts Environmental Police (contact information provided below). While safety is the primary concern, some munitions and ordnance may have historical value. BUAR may request consideration of disarming such materials rather than destroying them if possible to do without endangering anyone.

List of Contacts

Federal

U.S. Coast Guard

Contact: Use Channel 16 (156.800 MHz)

State

Massachusetts State Police Bomb Squad Unit

Contact: State Police Communications Section at (508) 820-2121
(who will contact the Bomb Squad)

Massachusetts Environmental Police

Contact: Communications Center (800) 632-8075 or (617) 626-1665
(who will contact local EPO)

Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources

Contact: David S. Robinson, Director (617) 626-1200; (david.s.robinson@mass.gov)
Note: Contact only if you are a BUAR permit holder.

Local

If materials are landed or discovered at your facility, you need to also contact the local police department.