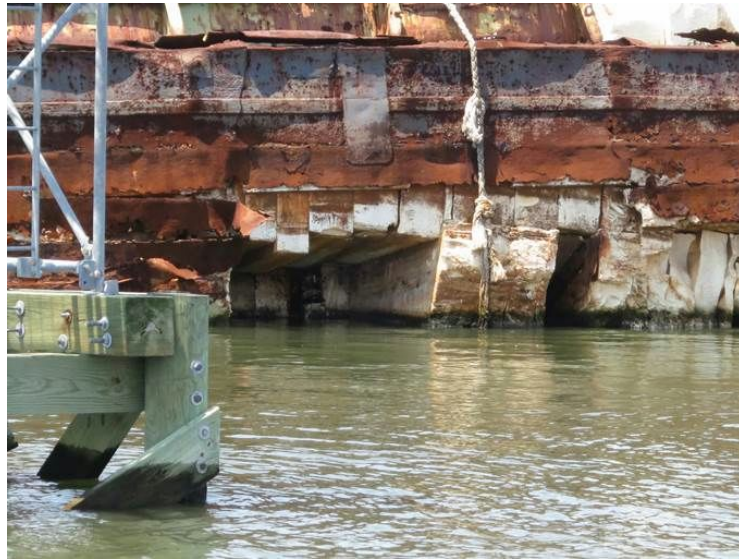


UPDATE - Report: 2 derelict barges in Flushing Bay & large source of styrofoam pollution



All,

Since our first email regarding this issue on 6/28/15 (below) we have not received a definitive response from any of the agencies or services initially contacted detailing a plan and schedule for removal of the derelict barges in Flushing Bay and/or the very large amount of Styrofoam and other contaminants which have been falling off these barges into Flushing Bay since January 2015. These barges present an immediate extreme hazard to commercial vessels including commercial passenger vessels operating in Flushing Bay, the tugs and barges serving the Flushing Transfer Station, and others.

The lack of ANY response specifying a plan and schedule for removal and remediation is completely unacceptable.

Flushing Bay is NOT a dump.

Who will step up?

New recipients have been added to this thread:

NOTE to new recipients – we recommend you read from the bottom up for context.

Flushing Bay advocates and boaters

U.S. Coast Guard

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

New York Department of Environmental Conservation

NOAA Marine Debris Program

NYC City Council (and staff)

NYS Assembly (and staff)

NYS Senate

Following are additional factors and evidence beyond those provided in our initial 6/28/15 email:

From a variety of sources we have learned that these barges are IN FACT not safely secure. They float during extreme tide events as they are FOAM filled and CANNOT sink.

- They first appeared at this location in early January 2015 after a wind storm (having drifted from a location on the east side of Flushing Bay). They were reported to NYSDEC and NYPD at that time. Styrofoam began falling off the barges and spreading around the Bay in January.
- The barges shifted slightly in March. The tug company serving the NYC Marine Transfer Station in Flushing appealed for help because the barges threatened barge and tug operations at the Transfer Station.
- In April one of the two barges broke in half. USACE sent a vessel on 4/22 and anchored the 1/2 barge section. In spite of that, according to witnesses, within 24 hours it shifted again, this time dragging anchor across the commercial navigation channel before grounding east of the channel. Obviously the anchor gear used was/is inadequate.
- Our photos from the same angle and location on two dates show that the 1-and-1/2 barge unit shifted between 6/11 and 7/3. THEY ARE NOT SECURED.



2) Here are 2 short Riverkeeper videos taken 8/5/15 which show both barge sections.

- As you will see, the 1-and-1/2 barge unit is NOT ANCHORED / NOT SECURED. The smaller 1/2 barge section seems to be anchored but we know it dragged after being anchored by USACE on 4/22.
- Neither section has a light mounted. Anchored vessels are required to be lit. High speed recreational boats operating in Flushing Bay are at high risk of a collision with these barges. This is a fatal accident waiting to happen.

1-and-1/2 barge at light #12: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn5SizvVI74>

1/2 barge east of channel: https://youtu.be/_VCGMrb_K9Q

3) These barges have foam blocks on deck AND are foam filled. They cannot fully sink like a conventional vessel. They will float and move again on the next storm tide – whether it's a Nor'easter or Hurricane.



4) Foam from the barges has spread all over Flushing Bay – stranding on both public and private property



John Lipscomb