

October 11, 2001

Edward V. Jeffords
514 S.E. Brookside Terrace
Port St. Lucie, Florida 34983-2206

Dear Mr. Jeffords:

Thank you for your E-mail of August 15, 2001 to Administrator Whitman regarding your concerns about the disposal of waste Visual Distress Signal (VDS) flares. The Administrator's office forwarded your note to my office, the Office of Solid Waste, for response.

I understand that the improper disposal of VDS flares can have a negative impact on the environment, and that there's a need for convenient and safe disposal sites at the local level. I am aware that the State of Florida has proven to be a leader in this field by developing an action plan for the safe collection and disposal of waste flares, and I agree the action plan could serve as a model for other states to develop programs to manage waste flares. In order to help promote this plan nationally, I will share Florida's action plan document, Waste Visual Distress Signal Flares Generated by Recreational Boaters (July 2000), with our Regional EPA Offices and other stakeholders so that they can benefit from Florida's progress.

I want to thank you for your hard work in helping the Florida program get started. My office has used your information and the Florida program to address the issue of flare disposal with other federal agencies that participate in the Interagency Committee on Explosives, including the US Coast Guard, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Department of Defense, and the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Again, thank you for your hard work in helping Florida develop a program for managing waste VDS flares. If you have any questions, please contact Jeff Gaines of my staff at (703) 308-8655.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Cotsworth, Director
Office of Solid Waste