Clean water. Healthy habitat. Thriving communities.
Connecticut River Conservancy

Visit ctriver.org/swap-your-dock to learn more about how you can help prevent plastic foam pollution!

Dock Replacement Options

Plastic foam is often perceived as a cheap and easy-to-install option for dock owners. **However, with a closer look at the lifetime costs and benefits of plastic foam in this chart, it becomes clear that alternatives such as encapsulated foam, barrels or compressed air, provide a cheaper option for dock owners and better deal for our environment.** Animals in and along the Connecticut River burrow into plastic foam or break it off, creating microplastics in the waterways that never fully break down. This presents a danger to our environment and its inhabitants. It's time to consider the real costs of plastic foam in our waterways and **SWAP YOUR DOCK!**

Floatation Materials	Pros	Cons	Upfront Cost for 4'x10' Dock Floatation	Expected Lifespan	Estimated Cost of Replacement Over 30 Years
Un-encapsulated plastic foam (Polystyrene)	Minimal upfront costs, widely available.	Animals can damage material by boring into the foam, creating hazards for aquatic species and microplastic pollution in rivers and oceans. Illegal in some areas.	$270	10 years	$1,080
Encapsulated plastic foam	Eliminates plastic foam pollution and can be made from recycled materials.	Can suffer damage from animals chewing, weep holes and boat contact.	$400	35 years	$400
New 55 Gallon Barrels	Float high in the water and are easy to transport. Can withstand harsh weather and ice.	Can be time-consuming to assemble at home. Raises docks to a higher level and can be unstable.	$215 for new barrels	40 years	$215
Used 55 Gallon Barrels	Reuse of existing materials, durable and very inexpensive/easy to find used. Can withstand harsh weather and ice	May come in varying condition if obtained used. Could potentially leach chemicals depending on former contents. Raises docks to a higher level and can be unstable.	$30 - $50 for reused barrels	30 years	$40
Pre-assembled Docks					
Air in Molded Polyethylene Cubes	Produced from High Density Polyethylene, which is recyclable and can be produced through a zero waste manufacturing process. Easy to assemble and come with a lifetime warranty from most sellers. Needs no additional dock surface.	Higher upfront costs. Can be unstable without additional dock support.	$850- $1,600	Lifetime warranty (50+ years)	$1,000
Aluminum Floating Dock with Resin Top (encapsulated foam)	Provides a complete kit for assembling docks without other materials.	High upfront costs. Subject to damage from animals and forms of contact.	$1,500	40 years	$1,335

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