



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 100

[Docket Number USCG-2025-1120]

RIN 1625-AA08

Special Local Regulation; 4th of July Fireworks, East River and Upper New York Bay, Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn, NY

AGENCY: Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is proposing to establish a temporary special local regulation (SLR) for certain navigable waters of the East River and Upper New York Bay in New York Harbor, NY. The SLR is needed to provide for the safety of life on these highly congested waterways immediately before, during, and after a 4th of July fireworks display. The rule would control vessel movement, prohibit entry into moving protection zones around transiting fireworks barges, establish exclusion zones near launch sites, and create spectator zones. The Coast Guard invites public comment on this proposed rulemaking.

DATES: Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: To submit comments and view available documents at <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for USCG-2025-1120.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions about this proposed rule, contact MST1 Scott Baumgartner, Sector New York Waterways

Management Division, U.S. Coast Guard; telephone 718-801-2932, or email

Scott.A.Baumgartner@uscg.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Table of Abbreviations

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COTP	Captain of the Port, Sector New York
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FR	<i>Federal Register</i>
NPRM	Notice of proposed rulemaking
§	Section
SLR	Special Local Regulation
U.S.C.	United States Code
VHF FM	Very High Frequency Modulated Radio Transmission

II. Background and Authority

Macy's has hosted an annual 4th of July fireworks display in New York harbor since 1976 in varying locations. In 2022, the Coast Guard established a permanent special local regulation (SLR) for the event, codified at 33 CFR 100.110.

However, the locations of the barge-based fireworks launch sites and the number of barges used have varied each year since then. On October 23, 2025, the Coast Guard received an updated Application for Marine Event, Form CG-4423, in which Macy's proposed to launch fireworks from multiple locations in a significantly larger event in 2026 than in past years. On January 16, 2026, Macy's updated their fireworks launch location to five barges on the East River south of Roosevelt Island, NY, three barges on the East River southwest of the Brooklyn Bridge near Manhattan, NY, and one land-based location from the deck of the Brooklyn Bridge over the East River. As such, the Coast Guard is proposing a temporary rule for Macy's 2026 fireworks display.

Additionally, this year's proposed display would take place concurrently with an International Naval Review and Sail 4th 250 event in New York Harbor. Refer to Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) published in the Federal Register on December 19, 2025, titled "Special Local Regulation, Temporary Anchorage Ground Suspension, and

Security Zones: Sail 4th 250, International Naval Review 250; Port of New York and New Jersey” (90 FR 59422). Any waterway restrictions established as a result of the temporary final rule for that regulatory project would also apply to any Special Local Regulation established under this regulatory project. The comment period for that regulatory project has closed. The Coast Guard is not accepting any comments on that rulemaking and is evaluating all comments already received.

Hazards from fireworks displays include accidental discharge of fireworks, dangerous projectiles, and falling hot embers or other debris. The COTP has therefore determined that potential hazards associated with fireworks are a safety concern for anyone within exclusion areas Charlie and Echo. In addition, when large numbers of vessels operate in close proximity to one another, the potential for other hazards, such as collisions and allisions with persons, vessels, and infrastructure is also heightened. The COTP has determined the high volume of commercial and recreational vessels expected to be operating in close proximity to one another in addition to the hazard areas around the fireworks displays warrant additional regulation to ensure the safety of participant and non-participant vessels. This rule also proposes to prohibit the operation of all personal watercraft within the regulated areas during the enforcement period of the rule. Due to their high speed and maneuverability, coupled with a history of incursions into exclusion zones within New York harbor, personal watercraft pose a significant safety risk in congested waterways and are considered a risk to the safety and security of this event.

The COTP is proposing this rule under the authority of 46 U.S.C. 70041 to ensure the safety of participants, spectators, non-participants, and other transiting vessels by establishing multiple zones for viewing the event and ensuring a safe distance from the fireworks launch sites. The proposed regulatory text appears at the end of this document.

III. Discussion of the Rule

This proposed rule would establish a special local regulation from 5:30 p.m. on

July 4, 2026, until 11:30 p.m. on July 5, 2026. It would only be enforced from 5:30 p.m. until 11:30 p.m. on July 4, 2026, unless the event is delayed because of weather conditions, in which case it will be subject to enforcement during those same hours on July 5, 2026. The duration of the enforcement times is intended to ensure the safety of vessels, participants, spectators and non-participants, and other vessels transiting the area immediately before, during, and after the fireworks display.

The regulated area would cover all navigable waters within 50 yards of the eight fireworks barges during their transit from their respective staging area to their respective launch location. This proposed rule would also create seven stationary regulated areas: an exclusion area around the Brooklyn Bridge area fireworks launch locations, an exclusion area around the Roosevelt Island area fireworks launch locations, and five spectator viewing areas. As shown in Figure 1 below, the exclusion areas, CHARLIE (“C”) and ECHO (“E”), would exclude all non-participant vessels, including spectator vessels, from the area surrounding the fireworks launch locations immediately before, during, and after the fireworks display. The five separate spectator viewing areas, ALPHA (“A”), BRAVO (“B”), DELTA (“D”), FOXTROT (“F”) and GOLF (“G”), would be available to vessels based on the vessel’s length and the timing of its entry into each zone. This proposed rule is based on the best available planning information at this time. It is important to note that, due to ongoing discussions regarding navigational safety and security concerns, spectator area DELTA (“D”) may ultimately be designated as an exclusion area rather than a spectator area in the temporary final rule. However, at this stage, the rule is being proposed with DELTA (“D”) included as a spectator area. We welcome and encourage all comments on this topic to help us understand the complex competing demands within this area.

Spectator area DELTA (“D”) would be open to all vessels. Any vessel desiring to utilize spectator area DELTA (“D”) would have to enter the regulated area by 7:30 p.m.

and would not be permitted to exit the area through either exclusion area, CHARLIE (“C”) or ECHO (“E”), until those areas are disestablished, or until spectator and other non-participant vessels are released from area Delta (“D”) by the COTP or their designated representative. Spectator areas ALPHA (“A”) and FOXTROT (“F”) would be open to vessels greater than 65.6 feet (20 meters) in length. Spectator areas BRAVO (“B”) and GOLF (“G”) would be open to vessels 65.6 feet (20 meters) or less in length. Vessels desiring to utilize areas ALPHA (“A”), BRAVO (“B”), FOXTROT (“F”) and GOLF (“G”) would be able to begin entering their designated viewing area at 8:00 p.m. Additionally, vessels desiring to utilize area FOXTROT (“F”) would have to be in a holding position no later than 9:00 p.m. and would be required to depart the area without delay following the conclusion of the fireworks display to enable the safe and timely resumption of ferry services. The conclusion of the fireworks display will be announced via a Broadcast Notice to Mariners on VHF-FM Channel 16 or on-scene by the COTP or their designated representative. The waters to the west, north, and south of spectator area Foxtrot (“F”) will be immediately available for these purposes while the waters to the east within exclusion area ECHO (“E”) will remain closed to unauthorized traffic until the “cooling off” period for the fireworks barges has expired.

Some of the areas regulated by this proposed rule overlap with areas covered by the proposed rule, “Special Local Regulation, Temporary Anchorage Ground Suspension, and Security Zones: Sail 4th 250, International Naval Review 250; Port of New York and New Jersey,” published in the Federal Register on December 19, 2025 (90 FR 59422). Only vessels authorized under the Sail 4th 250 and International Naval Review 250 proposed rule would be allowed to operate in the regulated areas proposed in this rulemaking during the enforcement period.

Figure 1: Chartlet showing the area and proposed layout of the Special Local Regulation.



Navigation rules, 33 CFR part 83, which are now in force, would continue to apply at all times within the regulated areas. The Coast Guard would provide notice of the special local regulation by Local Notice to Mariners, Broadcast Notice to Mariners,

and on-scene designated representatives. The regulatory text we are proposing appears at the end of this document.

IV. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this proposed rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders.

A. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term “small entities” comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities for the following reasons.

Vessel traffic would be able to safely transit around this regulated area using the Hudson River and Harlem River. Vessel traffic would only be restricted in the regulated area for approximately six hours on either July 4, 2026, or July 5, 2026. In addition, the Coast Guard would make advance public notification through a Broadcast Notice to Mariners (BNM) via VHF FM marine channel 16, a Local Notice to Mariners (LNM), a Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB), and/or a Coast Guard Advisory Notice (CGAN) which would allow small entities to adjust their transit plans and operations. The proposed rule would also allow vessels to request permission to enter the regulated area from the COTP.

If you think that your business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction qualifies as a small entity and that this proposed rule would have a significant economic impact on it, please submit a comment (see **ADDRESSES**) explaining why you think it

qualifies and how and to what degree this proposed rule would economically affect it.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-121), if this proposed rule will affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions, contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section. Small businesses may send comments to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards by calling 1-888-REG-FAIR (1-888-734-3247).

B. Collection of Information

This proposed rule does not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

C. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in that Order.

Also, this proposed rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it does not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes.

D. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

As required by The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531-1538), the Coast Guard certifies that this proposed rule would not result in an annual expenditure of \$100,000,000 or more (adjusted for inflation) by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector.

E. Environment

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Department of Homeland Security Directive 023-01, Rev. 1, associated implementing instructions, and Environmental Planning COMDTINST 5090.1 (series), which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), and have determined that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

This proposed rule is a special local regulation. It is categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L61.

V. Public Participation and Request for Comments

We view public participation as essential to effective rulemaking and will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. Your comment can help shape the outcome of this rulemaking. If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking, indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation.

Submitting comments. We encourage you to submit comments at <https://www.regulations.gov>. To do so, go to <https://www.regulations.gov>, type USCG-2025-1120 in the search box and click "Search." Next, look for this document in the **Search Results** column, and click on it. Then click on the **Comment** option. If you cannot submit your material by using <https://www.regulations.gov>, call or email the person in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this proposed rule for alternate instructions.

Viewing material in the docket. To view available documents, find the docket as described in the previous paragraph, and then select "Supporting & Related Material" in the Document Type column. We will post public comments in our online docket. Additional information is on the <https://www.regulations.gov> Frequently Asked

Questions webpage.

Personal information. We accept anonymous comments. Comments we post to <https://www.regulations.gov> will include any personal information you have provided.

For more about privacy and submissions to the docket in response to this document, see DHS's eRulemaking System of Records notice (85 FR 14226, March 11, 2020).

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 100

Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements,
Waterways

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard is proposing to amend 33 CFR part 100 as follows:

PART 100—SAFETY OF LIFE ON NAVIGABLE WATERS

1. The authority citation for part 100 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 46 U.S.C. 70041; 33 CFR 1.05-1.

2. Add § 100.T0199-1120 to read as follows:

§ 100.T0199-1120 Special Local Regulation; 4th of July Fireworks, East River and Upper New York Bay, Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn, NY

(a) *Regulated areas.* The regulations in this section apply to the following areas:

(1) *Spectator Area ALPHA (“A”)*: All navigable waters of the East River bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°45'30.76"N, 073°57'30.62"W (near the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge, Manhattan); thence to 40°45'26.02"N, 073°57'19.97"W (near the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge, Roosevelt Island); thence along shore to 40°44'58.05"N, 073°57'41.72"W (near the southern tip of Roosevelt Island); thence to 40°45'04.74"N, 073°57'54.27"W (near E. 48th Street, Manhattan), then along the shoreline back to the point of origin.

(2) *Spectator Area BRAVO (“B”)*: All navigable waters of the East River bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°45'22.71"N,

073°57'12.19"W (near the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge, Roosevelt Island); thence to 40°45'18.72"N, 073°57'03.05"W (near the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge, Queens); thence along shore to 40°44'51.80"N, 073°57'28.67"W (near 46th Avenue, Queens); thence to 40°44'57.87"N, 073°57'41.46"W (near the southern tip of Roosevelt Island), then along shore back to the point of origin.

(3) *Exclusion Area CHARLIE ("C")*: All navigable waters of the East River bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°45'04.74"N, 073°57'54.27"W (near E. 48th Street, Manhattan); thence to 40°44'51.80"N, 073°57'28.67"W (near 46th Avenue, Queens); thence along shore to 40°43'48.62"N, 073°57'40.66"W (near Greenpoint Water View, Brooklyn); thence to 40°43'47.56"N, 073°58'18.59"W (near E. 15th Street, Manhattan), then along shore back to the point of origin.

(4) *Spectator Area DELTA ("D")*: All waters of the East River bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°43'47.56"N, 073°58'18.59"W (near E. 15th Street, Manhattan); thence to 40°43'48.62"N, 073°57'40.66"W (near Greenpoint Water View, Brooklyn); thence to 40°42'16.42"N, 073°59'20.13"W (near Manhattan Bridge; Brooklyn); thence to 40°42'34.43"N, 073°59'30.24"W (near Manhattan Bridge; Manhattan), then along the shore back to the point of origin.

(5) *Exclusion Area ECHO ("E")*: All navigable waters of the East River bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°42'34.43"N, 073°59'30.24"W (near Manhattan Bridge; Manhattan); thence to 40°42'16.42"N, 073°59'20.13"W (near Manhattan Bridge; Brooklyn); thence along shore to 40°41'38.59"N, 074°00'12.43"W (near Pier 6, Brooklyn); thence to 40°41'33.44"N, 074°00'43.56"W (near the Hugh Carey Tunnel Ventilator Building, Governors Island); thence to 40°42'00.15"N, 074°00'43.06"W (near the Whitehall Ferry Terminal, Manhattan); then along shore back to the point of origin.

(6) *Spectator Area FOXTROT ("F")*: All navigable waters of New York Harbor bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°42'00.15"N, 074°00'43.06"W (near the Whitehall Ferry Terminal, Manhattan); thence to 40°41'33.44"N, 074°00'43.56"W (near the Hugh Carey Tunnel Ventilator Building, Governors Island); thence along shore to 40°41'35.48"N, 074°01'10.57"W (near Castle Williams, Governors Island); thence to 40°41'52.28"N, 074°01'16.13"W (near Deep Water Channel Lighted Buoy "1"); thence to 40°42'11.45"N, 074°01'03.02"W (near Castle Clinton, Manhattan); then along shore back to the point of origin.

(7) *Spectator Area GOLF ("G")*: All navigable waters of New York Harbor bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°41'33.44"N, 074°00'43.56"W (near the Hugh Carey Tunnel Ventilator Building, Governors Island); thence to 40°41'38.59"N, 074°00'12.43"W (near Pier 6, Brooklyn); thence along shore to 40°40'44.32"N, 074°01'10.24"W (near Brooklyn Cruise Terminal, Brooklyn); thence to 40°41'03.13"N, 074°01'32.08"W (near the southern tip of Governors Island); then along shore back to the point of origin.

(8) *Moving Protection Zone*: A moving protection zone on all navigable waters within a 50-yard radius of the participating barges while they are loaded with explosive material will be enforced from the point of departure within the COTP New York zone until placement at the intended destination. The point of departure will be determined prior to enforcement of the moving protection zone, and the details will be released through a Broadcast Notice to Mariners.

(9) These coordinates are based on the World Geodetic System (WGS 84) / North American Datum 83 (NAD 83).

(b) *Definitions*. As used in this section –

(1) *Designated representative* means a Coast Guard Patrol Commander, including a Coast Guard coxswain, petty officer, or other officer operating a Coast Guard

vessel and a Federal, State, and local officer designated by or assisting the Captain of the Port Sector New York (COTP) in the enforcement of the regulated areas in this section.

(2) *Official Patrol Vessel* means any Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Federal, State or local law enforcement vessel assigned or approved by the COTP to assist in the enforcement of the regulated areas in this section.

(3) *Participant* means all persons and vessels registered with the event sponsor as a participant in the event.

(4) *Personal watercraft* means any vessel propelled by a water-jet pump or other machinery as its primary source of motive power and designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling on the vessel, rather than sitting or standing within the vessel's hull.

(5) *Non-participant* means a person or vessel, including a spectator or spectator vessel, not registered with the event sponsor as participants or official patrol vessels.

(c) *Regulations.* (1) All non-participants are prohibited from entering, transiting through, anchoring in, or remaining within the regulated areas described in paragraph (a) of this section, except as provided in paragraph (c)(2), unless authorized by the COTP or their designated representative.

(2) All vessels that are authorized by the COTP or their designated representative to enter the regulated areas established by this section must adhere to the following restrictions:

(i) Spectator Area ALPHA (“A”) is limited to vessels over 65.6 feet (20 meters) in length. Vessels desiring to use spectator area ALPHA (A”) may enter the area starting at 8:00 p.m.

(ii) Spectator Area BRAVO (“B”) is limited to vessels less-than or equal to 65.6 feet (20 meters) in length. Vessels desiring to use spectator area BRAVO (“B”) may enter

the area starting at 8:00 p.m.

(iii) All non-participant vessels are prohibited from entering exclusion area CHARLIE (“C”) without permission from the COTP or their designated representative after 7:30 p.m. All vessels authorized to transit by the COTP or their designated representative must pass as close to the pierhead as safely possible and must transit through the area no later than 8:00 p.m. Vessels must operate at the minimum speed necessary to maintain safe course while crossing through area CHARLIE (“C”) and comply with all directions that may be provided by the COTP or their designated representative.

(iv) Spectator Area DELTA (“D”) is open to all vessels. All vessels desiring to enter and exit area DELTA (“D”) must complete their transit by 7:30 p.m. Vessels within spectator area DELTA (“D”) at 7:30 p.m. will not be able to exit through exclusion areas CHARLIE (“C”) and ECHO (“E”) until those areas are disestablished by COTP or after receiving authorization from the COTP or their designated representative.

(v) All non-participant vessels are prohibited from entering exclusion area ECHO (“E”) without permission from the COTP or their designated representative after 7:30 p.m. All vessels authorized to transit by the COTP or their designated representative must pass as close to the pierhead as safely possible and must transit through the area no later than 8:00 p.m. Vessels must operate at the minimum speed necessary to maintain safe course while crossing through area ECHO (“E”) and comply with all directions that may be provided by the Coast Guard.

(vi) Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”) is limited to vessels over 65.6 feet (20 meters) in length. Vessels desiring to use area FOXTROT (“F”) may begin entering the designated spectator area at 8:00 p.m. and must be in a holding position no later than 9:00 p.m. Vessels must depart spectator area FOXTROT (“F”) without delay following the conclusion of the fireworks display.

(vii) Spectator Area Golf (“G”) is limited to vessels less than or equal to 65.6 feet (20 meters) in length. Vessels desiring to use spectator area GOLF (“G”) may enter the area starting at 8:00 p.m.

(3) During periods of enforcement all persons and vessels in the regulated areas must comply with all lawful orders and directions from the COTP or their designated representative

(4) During periods of enforcement, the COTP or their designated representative may restrict the number of vessels allowed within the regulated area to prevent overcrowding and ensure safe navigation. Once the COTP or their designated representative determines that the regulated area has reached a safe capacity, no additional vessels will be allowed to enter unless specifically authorized by the COTP or their designated representative.

(5) The operation of *personal watercraft* is prohibited in any regulated areas.

(6) Vessel operators desiring to enter or operate within the regulated areas outside the restrictions identified in (c)(2) of this section should contact the COTP or their designated representative at 844-NYC-USCG or on VHF 16 to obtain permission.

(7) Non-participant and Spectator Vessels must not anchor, block, loiter or impede the transit of event participants or official patrol vessels in the regulated areas during the enforcement period and times unless authorized by the COTP or their designated representative.

(d) *Enforcement periods.* (1) This section is in effect from 5:30 p.m. July 4, 2026, to 11:30 p.m. July 5, 2026. It will only be subject to enforcement, however, from 5:30 p.m. through 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 4, 2026, unless the event is delayed because of weather conditions, in which case it may be subject to enforcement of those same hours on July 5, 2026.

(2) The COTP will provide advance notice of the enforcement period for the

regulated areas as well as any changes to the enforcement times of the regulated area through local notice to mariners, broadcast notice to mariners, and through on-scene notice by the COTP's designated representative or official patrol vessels.

Jonathan A. Andrechik,

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard,

Captain of the Port, Sector New York.

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