

# Frequently Asked Questions for the 2009 Maryland Lighthouse Challenge

**What is the Maryland Lighthouse Challenge?** The Challenge is a weekend-long event in which the general public is invited to visit the land-accessible lighthouses of Maryland. The Challenge Lights include Turkey Point, Concord Point, Seven Foot Knoll, the Chesapeake Lightship, Hooper Strait, Cove Point, Drum Point, Point Lookout, Piney Point and Fort Washington. They will all be open for access, and climbing wherever possible. You can visit one, two, or more of the lighthouses, and receive a complimentary event souvenir at each location. The real Challenge, however, is to visit all the lighthouses along the Challenge route. Do so, and you will receive a special souvenir to mark your accomplishment!

**How early can I start?** The lighthouses have all agreed to open by 8:00 a.m. Please be aware that if you intend to start before the 8:00 a.m. start time it is likely that the lighthouses may not be open, or our volunteers may not have arrived or be set up yet.

The lighthouses will be open until 6:00 p.m. both days.

**Where do I start?** You can start at any light along the Challenge route. Directions are listed in the Challenge Brochure, which will become available on-line and in print form mid spring. The order of the directions are listed in the north to south direction on the inner flaps of the brochure, beginning with Turkey Point and ending with Fort Washington—or you can follow in reverse order, Fort Washington to Turkey Point. Following the route in either of these orders, however, is only a suggestion. You are encouraged to start anywhere along the route. We have found in the past, people have often chosen to chart their own courses and plan accordingly.

For your aid in navigating the state of Maryland, you can obtain the latest copy of a Maryland Map at [www.marylandroads.com](http://www.marylandroads.com).

**Please note:** Event volunteers and set-up for the Baltimore lights (Seven Foot Knoll and the Chesapeake Lightship) are at the Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse location only; therefore, you should plan to visit the lighthouse at Pier V first.

**How long does it take to do the entire Challenge?** The time it takes to complete the whole Challenge will vary depending on how long you spend at each lighthouse and when and where you stop. Road conditions in this area can be unpredictable and that may add to the time that it takes to get to each lighthouse. If you are planning to visit all the lights on the Challenge, plan on taking the two days. *What we encourage above all else, is that participants drive safely. This is a driving tour to be enjoyed, not a race just to see who finishes the Challenge first.*

**Is there a rain date?** The Challenge will take place rain or shine. There is no rain date. This event takes an extraordinary number of volunteers and it would not be possible to have this many people set aside two weekends for such an event.

**How much does it cost?** The Chapter does not charge anything for the brochures or the souvenir pieces, and in fact must raise the money to pay for these items. HOWEVER, some of the lighthouses do charge fees (depending upon whether you climb the lighthouse, etc). In almost

all cases these fees have been reduced for Challenge weekend to encourage people to visit as many lights as possible. Fees are at the discretion of each lighthouse organization, not the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S.L.H.S. There are also some park fees and tolls along some of the roads. Due to parking issues and the remoteness of the Turkey Point Lighthouse, there is a shuttle fee of \$2.00 per person (children under 12 ride free) for a mandatory shuttle from the Turkey Point parking lot to the walking path out to the light. This is in addition to the state park fee of \$3.00. We will indicate the anticipated Challenge costs, but please understand, we have no control over them.

**Can I get into each lighthouse?** We have arranged entry into each lighthouse and all have agreed. This does not mean you can climb all of them. For liability reasons, you will not be able to climb all of the lights, although you will be able to enter the base of those not climbable. **NOTE:** Due to preservation work that may be occurring at any one of the challenge lights at any time, it is possible that entry into a lighthouse may become restricted from what is noted in the brochure. If this was to occur, it will be noted on the Chapter website [www.cheslights.org](http://www.cheslights.org).

**Who benefits from the money raised Challenge Weekend?** The organizations that take care of the lights get the money you pay in fees. In some cases the fees are just to cover the cost of opening it to the public. In others, the money is used in preservation efforts or as the organization sees fit. There are some mandatory park fees that do not go to the lighthouses directly. No money raised through fees goes to the Chesapeake Chapter U.S.L.H.S. We encourage you to support the Chapter, however, by purchasing event souvenirs such as the Challenge t-shirts, 7<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration pins or any other Chapter merchandise. The money raised through the sale of these will help offset some of the costs for next year's Challenge.

**Will there be food available at any of the lighthouses?** In the past the Boy Scouts have sold food at Turkey Point Lighthouse and it is anticipated that they may do so again. There are restaurants located at the Inner Harbor and near many of the lighthouses along the Challenge route. In most cases, however, there will be no food sold on the premises.

**Will there be gift shops open?** Many of the lighthouses do have gift shops or will have items available. The availability will vary by lighthouse. Please note that not all lighthouse organizations have the ability to take credit cards and only accept cash.

**Will there be Chapter merchandise available?** The Chapter will have items at Calvert Marine Museum and possibly other select stops along the Challenge route. Or you can order through our website at [www.cheslights.org/keepersloft.htm](http://www.cheslights.org/keepersloft.htm).

**Will there be Challenge T-shirts this year?** Last year we had Challenge T-shirts available at Concord Point, Drum Point, Piney Point, Point Lookout and Turkey Point. If this changes, it will be posted on the website.

**Why are you doing this?** Part of the mission of the Chapter is to promote appreciation for lighthouses and to educate the public about them. This is one way to get people out to enjoy the lighthouses of Maryland.

**Do you have to be a Chapter member to take the Challenge?** No. It is open to anyone! There are many advantages to becoming a member and Chapter membership forms will be available at each light from our volunteer hosts. Or sign up on our website at [www.cheslights.org/membership.htm](http://www.cheslights.org/membership.htm).

**Do you have to register to take the Challenge?** No, you just start at any participating lighthouse and go to as many or as few as you choose. Challenge souvenirs will be awarded at each lighthouse visited. See event brochures for details regarding this year's bonus lights.

**Are Chapter dues used to pay for the Challenge?** No, money to pay for the Challenge is raised through county contributions, donations, raffles and the sale of Challenge t-shirts/Chapter merchandise during the event itself.

**Are you going to do a Virginia Challenge?** There are far fewer lighthouses that would be available for a Virginia Challenge and at least three of the four land accessible lights are on military bases. This would make coordination of such a Challenge difficult and with only about four lights, a bit less Challenging for the participants. If you can think of an event to draw attention to the Virginia lights, by all means share it with us.