

## Don't Violate Federal Flag Code

In celebration of the 235th

anniversary of the nation's first flag act adopted on June 14th

, 1777, the military law firm of Tully Rinckey PLLC and its team of former Army JAG attorneys wish to remind everyone that the American flag is a symbol of our freedom and should be treated as such. If you plan to incorporate patriotic decorations into your festivities on Flag Day and the upcoming July 4th

holiday, be sure to first familiarize yourself with American flag etiquette, otherwise known as Federal Flag Code. Public Law 94-344 contains rules for handling, displaying, and disposing of the American flag. Although there is no federal penalty for misusing or improperly disposing of the U.S. flag, individual states do have their own flag codes, which may impose penalties. Under Article 19 of New York's Executive Law, there are several rules similar to those of the Federal Flag Code. To avoid repercussions — and to commemorate your country in a dignified manner — keep these guidelines in mind as you prepare for Flag Day, as well as during any other time that requires you to handle the American flag. The flag should never be used for any sort of decoration, advertising or costuming. The only exception to this is on the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen and members of patriotic organizations, where a flag patch may be displayed.

The flag should never be flown in inclement weather, unless it is designed for such use.

The flag should never be embroidered, printed or otherwise impressed upon any item intended for temporary use, or upon any item that will later be discarded.

The flag should never have any mark, insignia, letter, word, number or drawing of any kind placed upon or attached to it.

When lowered, the flag should never touch the ground or any object except receiving hands and arms. After lowering, it should be folded and stored neatly.

When necessary, the flag should be cleaned and mended. When it becomes too worn, it should be destroyed in a dignified manner by burning. After the flag has been completely consumed by flame, the ashes should be buried.

"Treat the flag the same way you treat your freedom. If anyone has an American flag that they wish to dispose of respectfully they can drop it off to our offices, and we will make sure the proper steps are taken," said Greg T. Rinckey, a military law attorney and the managing partner of Tully Rinckey PLLC.