

# Boater Education

## Environmental Concerns

Boaters and marina operators have the potential to negatively impact the water quality in and around a marina through neglect and poor judgment. In order for a marina to maintain its standards, it is important to educate your clientele and employees on any issues that could affect the water quality and appearance of the marina (recycling, boat cleaning, fueling, painting, sewage, fish wastes, and hazardous materials). The following list of best management practices (BMP's) provides guidance for these issues:

## Goals

Provide boaters and employees with information on water pollution and provide them with ways to correct and prevent any water pollution activities in which they may be involved.

## Legal Setting

Delaware's solid waste management program, including vessel sewage discharge requirements, is authorized under The Water and Air Resources Act, Title 7. Del. C., Chapter 60. The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) is responsible for protecting, preserving, and enhancing the environmental quality of the water, air, and land of the State.

It is illegal to litter in the waterways in the State of Delaware. (Title 7. Del. C., Chapter 60, § 6073.)

Federal pollution law also addresses the following:

- Litter/ debris (e.g., plastic bags, food waste, aluminum cans, fishing line) regulated by MARPOL -- (MARine POLLution), the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships at Sea, and MPPRCA -- Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act
- Fuel and Oil (e.g., gasoline, motor oil) regulated by CWA -- Clean Water Act and OPA -- Oil Pollution Act of 1990
- Dispersants (e.g., dishwashing soaps, detergent) regulated by CWA -- Clean Water Act and OPA -- Oil Pollution Act of 1990
- Sewage (human waste) regulated by CWA -- Clean Water Act and CVA -- Clean Vessel Act
- Hazardous Substances (e.g., boat cleaners, varnish, used oil, cleaners) regulated by CWA -- Clean Water Act and OPA -- Oil Pollution Act of 1990
- Bottom Paints (e.g., Tributyl-tin (TBT) based boat paints) regulated by OAPCA -- Organotin Antifoulant Paint Control Act of 1988

## Best Management Practices

- ❖ Distribute clean boating tip sheets to boaters. These tip sheets can be found at the end of this chapter and there is space for the marina to put its logo and name.
- ❖ Provide clear signage for recycling, trash, bathrooms, pumpouts, and showers so that boaters can easily participate in your Clean Marina Program.
- ❖ Contact your local Coast Guard Auxiliary for brochures and advice about safe boating.
- ❖ Include language in the boaters' contracts explaining the environmental policies of the marina.
- ❖ Walk your docks and ask boaters if they have any questions.
- ❖ Make a point of noticing pollution problems (i.e., sheens near boats). Point out to the boater activities that are not acceptable in your marina and provide advice on how to correct the problem.
- ❖ Offer "green" cleaners for sale at your store.
- ❖ Hold workshops for issues of concern to you and/or your boaters.

### 7 tips for reaching boaters.

- *Don't assume they know.* Most boaters want to do the "right thing", but may not know what that is. Help educate them so they are part of your clean water team.
- *Repeat your clean boating messages.* Marketing experts advise that we must hear things 7 times before they sink in. As you are educating your boaters, remember to repeat what you are trying to teach them in different ways and in different places.
- *Be positive.* It's easy to say, "no littering", but it's more effective to say, "Please recycle here."
- *Identify your target audiences.* Spend 5 minutes and identify what audiences need to be reached with your education efforts. They may include transients, ramp users, pumpout users, fuel dock customers, work colleagues, part time summer employees, neighbors, press, regulators, liveaboards, visitors, and old and new slip holders. Analyze your outreach efforts to figure out what efforts may be reaching what audiences, and customize future educational work to reach them all.
- *Speak their language.* Don't educate with acronyms or big regulatory words. Use simple language to help your boaters understand what you want them to do. In some cases, you may need to educate in more than one language, or you may want to use pictures to help illustrate actions instead of translating everything.
- *Test on a guinea pig.* When you are ready to educate your customers, whether it's through a poster, sticker, or newsletter article, have someone else review your material. Don't choose your business partner, or someone that knows the topic well. Pick a trusted customer or someone that is brand new to the topic, and ask for their candid feedback. Then adjust your work accordingly.
- *Serve as an example.* Actions speak louder than words. Pick up trash off the ground. Recycle in the office. Fuel boats cleanly. If you serve as an example to both your patrons and your colleagues, you are telling them it's what you expect, and what's right.

## Environmental Education Boater Resources

If you would like to obtain additional education material for you or your patrons, this list provides descriptions of some materials and where to find them.

### Winterizing your boat

This brochure includes information on storing your boat during the winter and how to winterize your boat properly. (also see Winterizing you 2-cycle engine in the "Tip Sheets" section of this guidebook).

<http://www.boatus.com/seaworthy/winter/brochure.asp>

### 21 Steps

This brochure contains pollution prevention tips on garbage, sewage, fuel, maintenance and fishing aboard boats.

<http://www.boatus.com/news/releases/2001/june/pollution.asp>

### Stash Your Trash

This brochure is about littering from the land and the water and includes ideas for both boaters and beach goers.

<http://www.boatus.com/news/releases/2001/june/pollution.asp>

### United States Coast Guard Sea Partners Program Materials

<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nmc/mail.htm#general>

Includes:

- "Our Water Planet" (pamphlet)
- "How's the Water" (pamphlet)
- "Help Us Protect the Marine Environment" (pamphlet)
- "Guide for a Cleaner Boating Environment" (pamphlet)
- "Report Marine Pollution" (Sticker)

### National Clean Boating Campaign Fact Sheets

<http://cleanboating.org/research/boatingpublic.html>

Includes:

- "Boating Litter and Fish Waste"
- "Fuelage and Bilge Care"
- "Sewage Control and Pumpout"
- "Best Management Practices"
- "Boat Maintenance"

### "Shipshape Shores and Waters: A Handbook for Marina Operators and Recreational Boaters"

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/marinashdbk2003.pdf>

### Delaware Clean Marina Program Boater Education Fact Sheets

These fact sheets can also be located in this guidebook.

<http://www.dnrec.state.de.us/DNREC2000/P2/Marina/index.htm>

Includes:

- "Vessel Cleaning"
- "Bottom Paint"
- "Underwater Hull Cleaning"
- "Petroleum Control"
- "Vessel Sewage"
- "Waste Containment"
- "Winterizing Outboards"

## Information Sources

American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC)  
(410) 956-1050

Appendix I

BoatU.S. Foundation  
(703) 823-9550 x3200

Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)

- Division of Fish and Wildlife  
(302) 739-9915.

United States Coast Guard  
(202) 267-2229

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary  
(877) 875-6296

University of Delaware Sea Grant Marine Advisory Service  
(302) 645-4268