

January 30, 2008

Maine Boatyard or Marina Customer

RE: No Discharges Areas and Clean Boatyards and Marinas.

Dear Boat Owner:

You may already know that No Discharge Areas (NDAs) have come to Maine. Casco Bay is the first of what we hope will be a string of NDAs along Maine's coast including the Kennebunk River/Wells Beach area, Boothbay Harbor, Camden, Rockport Rockland Southwest and Northeast Harbors. Within NDAs no vessel may discharge sewage (toilet waste), not even sewage treated by a flow through wastewater treatment system (like a Lectra-San). While within the limits of a NDA, owners of all vessels with installed toilets must either 1) secure the toilet so that it cannot be used or 2) ensure that the toilet is connected to a functioning holding tank (Type III Marine Sanitation Device) and that the valve directing the waste is secured in the "to tank" position. Waste from the holding tank must either be pumped out or discharge greater than 3 miles offshore. Graywater from sinks and showers may continue to go overboard. Vessels without installed toilets are in compliance by default. I hope that all Maine boat owners will take this opportunity to review the status of their sewage management system onboard

To ensure compliance, I suggest you do the following:

- Inspect, or request your boatyard inspect, your sewage management system including your Marine Sanitation Device (MSD).
- Replace all hoses and hose clamps over 5 years old with sanitary hose and stainless steel hose clamps.
- Install a new, or replace a failed, holding tank with a rigid welded plastic, stainless steel, or fiberglass holding tank, equipped with an effective venting system.
- Make sure that the discharge line is located in the lowest (deepest) part of the tank, and that your deck fitting is secure and functional.
- If you currently have a flow through treatment device (Type I or Type II MSD) and plan to visit any existing or proposed NDAs, you must have a functioning holding tank or a method to secure the toilet so it cannot be used. If your Type I or II MSD is malfunctioning or needs significant repair, consider replacing it with a holding tank only.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has been working with Maine boatyards and marinas to improve environmental compliance, reduce wastes, and become more energy efficient. As the boatyards and marinas improve their environmental practices, it is very helpful for boat owners to examine their practices as well. Many boatyards and marinas are significantly reducing or eliminating owner-hired subcontractors or do-it-yourself work due to liability and waste management concerns. In the following paragraphs, I will explain some of the

environmental issues associated with boat maintenance and repair so you can be mindful as you work with your boatyard or marina or do work at home.

One of the most time consuming jobs of your boatyard's environmental manager is waste management. Boatyards and marinas must segregate wastes, test them and send them out for proper disposal. All paint waste must be kept separate from solvents and those from epoxies, etc. Most of this waste must be handled as special or hazardous waste. It cannot be thrown in the dumpster. Recycling, reducing, and reusing as much material as possible helps reduce costs, but at some point some waste has to be shipped off. Many boatyards and marinas work hard to find less hazardous chemicals or significantly reduce the amount they use. By carefully managing their waste streams, your boatyard is reducing their waste, saving money, complying with very strict laws, and protecting the environment.

At home, do-it-yourself boat owners can do their part by segregating wastes to ensure that hazardous or toxic materials are not spilled in their driveway or backyard or go to an improper disposal location. Please be sure to collect all paint waste, including paint sanding dust, and bag it separately from your normal trash. Do not burn painted or treated wood in your woodstove or fireplace as the metals and other compound in the paint can be released into the air or concentrated in the ash. Do not wash brush cleaner, paint stripper, acetone, or any other solvents down the drain. Doing so will wash those toxic materials into the groundwater, and potentially your drinking water, via your septic system or will wind up in the public sewer system. Most of the materials are best taken to your transfer station

When using your boat next year, please make sure your sewage management system is working properly and that you prevent raw sewage from entering Maine's beautiful waters. There are over 80 pumpout stations along the Maine coast and several on the larger lakes with more coming on line regularly. Also, be very careful when fueling in your boat. Inspect your fuel tank venting system to determine if there is a safety loop to prevent fuel from coming out the vent. Fuel docks and marinas often have absorbent material that you can use to catch any drips before it gets to the water.

Finally, ask your boatyard or marina if they are certified through the Maine Clean Boatyards and Marinas program. It is a free, industry led, program to recognize boatyards and marinas that strive for environmental excellence. The self check that is part of the program is a great tool for any marina or boatyard to assess their environmental compliance.

If you have any questions regarding environmental compliance at boatyards and marinas or would like more information on NDAs and boat pumpout locations, please feel free to contact me at pamela.d.parker@maine.gov, or 207-287-7905

Sincerely,

Pamela Parker, Manager
Boat Pumpout Grant and NDA Program