

# Clean Boating Tip Sheet

## Waste Containment and Disposal

Marine debris—especially plastic—has become a major problem in our environment. For example, plastic may snare propellers and choke animals such as turtles or sea birds. Congress passed a law in 1987 to protect our waterways from garbage. The Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act (Title II of Public Law 100-220) regulates the disposal of garbage at sea according to how far a vessel is from shore:

- Within U.S. lakes, rivers, bays, sounds, and within 3 nautical miles from the ocean shore, it is illegal to dump anything other than fish scraps.
- Between 3 and 12 nautical miles from shore, it is illegal to dump plastic and any other garbage that is greater than one inch in size.
- Between 12 and 25 nautical miles from shore, it is illegal to dump plastic and dunnage, i.e., lining and packing material, nets, lines, etc.
- Beyond 25 nautical miles, it is illegal to dump plastic.

Meeting the law is easy. Just follow these tips!

### Contain Trash

- Don't let trash get thrown or blown overboard.
- If trash blows overboard, retrieve it. Consider it "crew-overboard" practice.
- Pack food in reusable containers.
- Buy products without plastic or excessive packaging.
- Don't toss cigarette butts overboard. They are made of plastic (cellulose acetate).
- Purchase refreshments in recyclable containers and recycle them.
- Properly dispose of all trash on-shore, e.g., bring home or leave in a dumpster at the marina.

### Recycle

- Recycle cans, glass, newspaper, antifreeze, oil, oil filters, and lead batteries.
- Call 1-800-4-RECYCLE for locations.
- Bring used monofilament fishing line to recycling bins at your tackle shop or marina.

### Fish Scraps

For safety reasons, marinas are often located in sheltered areas—areas that will protect boats from wind and waves during a storm. The same features that protect boats during a storm, however, also limit the exchange of water. Poor exchange, or flushing, means that any waste which is discharged into the water may stay in the same general area for an extended length of time.

Fish cleaning may pose a problem if the scraps are discarded into a poorly flushed marina basin. Fish waste is smelly and unsightly. Also, life-sustaining oxygen is removed from the water column as bacteria decompose the innards. Avoid problems by following these tips.

- Do not discard fish waste in poorly flushed areas.
- Find out what your marina's disposal policy is.
- Bag waste and dispose at home or in a dumpster.
- Dispose over deep water.

## Maintenance Waste

Dispose of the following items according to the recommendations listed below. Call 1-800-4-RECYCLE or contact your county solid waste department for recycling center locations. Visit [menv.com](http://menv.com) to locate a free, public collection center for used oil and antifreeze.

Waste Product	Disposal Method
Oil	Recycle.
Oil Filters	Puncture and hot drain for 24 hours. Recycle oil and canister.
Antifreeze	Recycle.
Batteries	Recycle. Boatyards and battery stores often accept them.
Paint and Varnish	Allow to dry completely, i.e., solidify. Dispose in regular trash.
Solvents, Gasoline, and Pesticides	Bring to a household hazardous waste collection day.
Expired Emergency Flares	Contact local Coast Guard Auxiliary or Power Squadron who may be able to use in a demonstration or take to a household hazardous waste collection day with your county solid waste department.

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*For information about the Maryland Clean Marina Initiative, contact the Maryland Department of Natural Resources at (410) 260-8773 or visit [dnr.maryland.gov/boating](http://dnr.maryland.gov/boating)*

