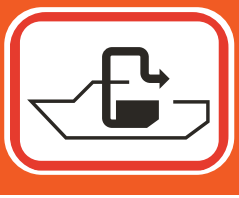


KEEP FLORIDA'S WATER CLEAN

# USE PUMPOUTS

## WHAT IS THE CLEAN VESSEL ACT?

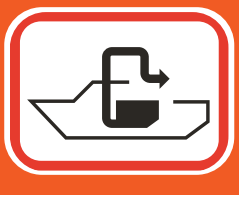
The primary goal of the federal Clean Vessel Act (CVA) is to reduce sewage discharge from recreational boats that can foul water and seriously affect human and aquatic health. Congress passed the CVA in 1992 after determining there were too few onshore sewage disposal facilities to accommodate recreational boaters.

The CVA provides funds to states to construct, renovate, operate and maintain pumpout stations and pumpout boats. Since 1994, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has awarded millions of dollars in CVA grants, creating more than 500 pumpout facilities throughout the state.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE SEWAGE DISCHARGE INTO WATERS?

- Use marina pumpout facilities and waste dump receptacles.
- Use onshore public restrooms and showers whenever possible.
- Make sure that waste does not go directly into the water.
- If you have a flow-through treatment system – Type I or Type II Marine Sanitation Device (MSD) – ensure it is working properly and that all waste goes through the system.
- Install a holding tank – Type III MSD – and pump it out at one of hundreds of pumpout stations available throughout the state.
- If you have a Type III MSD, make sure the Y-valve is securely connected to the holding tank so there is no discharge of raw sewage.
- Do not dispose of fats, solvents, oil, emulsifiers, disinfectants, paints, poisons, phosphates or diapers in your MSD.
- Use enzyme-based products in your holding tank instead of deodorizers and disinfectants, which can harm aquatic life.
- Encourage marinas to provide convenient pumpout stations or pumpout vessels.

**FloridaDEP.gov/CleanVessel**



KEEP FLORIDA'S WATER CLEAN

# USE PUMPOUTS

## WHY SHOULD I PUMPOUT?

### IT'S THE LAW

Federal law and Florida Statute 327.53 prohibit discharging raw sewage in all fresh water or within coastal water limits extending 9 nautical miles in the Gulf of Mexico and 3 nautical miles in the Atlantic Ocean.

### TO PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH

Sewage from boats contains disease-causing microorganisms that, when discharged into waterways, can make people sick. Untreated discharge from one weekend boater puts the same amount of bacterial pollution into the water as the treated sewage of 10,000 people. Typhoid, hepatitis, cholera, gastroenteritis and other waterborne diseases can be passed directly to people who swim in contaminated waters. People also can be infected by eating shellfish contaminated with viruses and other microorganisms contained in sewage discharge.

### TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Sewage reduces oxygen levels in the water that fish and other aquatic species need to survive. Because the microorganisms within the sewage need oxygen, any discharge into waterways reduces the amount of oxygen available to fish and other aquatic life. Heavy nutrient loads in sewage also promote excessive algae growth and prevent life-giving sunlight from reaching subsurface vegetation.

Compounding the problem is the presence of chemical additives often used to disinfect and deodorize vessel toilet systems and holding tanks. These additives often contain formaldehyde, paraformaldehyde, quaternary ammonium chloride and zinc sulfate, which can harm aquatic life.


*revised 4/20*

**FloridaDEP.gov/CleanVessel**