

Bilge water

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EPA 935/10: This information sheet is part of a series on environmental management practices for vessel and facility management on marine and inland waters. This information is extracted from the code of practice published in 2008.

Introduction

A large number of small discharges of oily waste add up to a significant problem. Oily waste contains polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). These are carcinogens and are implicated in diseases of aquatic organisms and subsequent human health problems.

Who this applies to

- vessel operators
- slipway operators
- marina operators
- boat yard operators
- boat ramp operators
- boat and yacht club operators

Operators must (required outcomes)

- 1 for all vessels operating on state waters where oily bilge water is generated, install and maintain oil filtration devices on bilge pumps
OR
place commercially manufactured oil absorption material in bilges (eg bilge socks/rats)
- 2 not pump bilge water (unless for safety of the vessel) into a waterway or soil if it contains visible signs of oil, hydrocarbons or other wastes
- 3 not use detergent or emulsifier in bilge water.

Operators should (recommended practices)

- 4 use, maintain and dispose of filters and absorption devices according to manufacturer's instructions
- 5 maintain engines regularly to prevent oil and fuel leaks to the bilge. In particular, check fuel lines for cracks and loose connections
- 6 use polypropylene bilge socks in preference to biodegradable items.

References

EPA, *EPA Guideline: Disposal of used hydrocarbon absorbent materials*,
www.epa.sa.gov.au/xstd_files/Waste/Guideline/guide_hydrocarbon.pdf.

EPA, *Code of Practice for vessel and facility management (marine and inland waters)*,
www.epa.sa.gov.au/xstd_files/Water/Code%20of%20practice/vessels.pdf.

Useful websites

EPA Vessel and facility management pages, www.epa.sa.gov.au/vfm.

Disclaimer

This publication is a guide only and does not necessarily provide adequate information in relation to every situation. This publication seeks to explain your possible obligations in a helpful and accessible way. In doing so, however, some detail may not be captured. It is important, therefore, that you seek information from the EPA itself regarding your possible obligations and, where appropriate, that you seek your own legal advice.

Further information

Legislation

Legislation may be viewed at: <www.legislation.sa.gov.au>

Copies of legislation are available for purchase from:

Service SA Government Legislation Outlet
Adelaide Service SA Centre
108 North Terrace
Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: 13 23 24
Facsimile: (08) 8204 1909
Website: <shop.service.sa.gov.au>

For general information please contact:

Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607
Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8204 2004
Facsimile: (08) 8124 4670
Freecall (country): 1800 623 445
Website: <www.epa.sa.gov.au>
Email: <epainfo@epa.sa.gov.au>
