

NEWS From BoatUS

Boat Owners Association of The United States

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BoatUS Press Room at <http://www.BoatUS.com/pressroom>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Available at: <http://www.BoatUS.com/pressroom/previewImg/hiRes/641.jpg>

Photo Caption: Boat owners need to let the EPA know how they operate, maintain and even clean their boats.

BoatUS Urges Boaters To Be Heard on New EPA Requirements

Deadline for Public Comments is June 2

ALEXANDRIA, Va. March 30, 2011 — Remember the Clean Boating Act of 2008? The bi-partisan federal legislation stopped recreational boats from falling under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) permit requirements originally targeting “normal operating discharges” from commercial ships. However, the Act required the EPA to analyze recreational boat discharges and eventually mandate “Management Practices” to address environmental concerns.

Now the Agency is asking boaters to speak up about how they operate and maintain their boat as it moves forward developing and eventually implementing those management practices. The deadline for comments is June 2.

“Management Practices would be methods, techniques, or tools which could mitigate any environmental impact of normal discharges into our waters,” said BoatUS Vice President of Government Affairs Margaret Podlich. “They will vary according to boat type and what that vessel could potentially discharge. For example, the EPA is looking at engine maintenance and could create a management practice that requires the use of a bilge sock to soak up oil in your engine compartment. Of course, this couldn’t apply to a rowboat. But it’s important to understand they are looking at all recreational watercraft.”

Continued Podlich, “BoatUS has been working with boaters for years to help them understand how to minimize their impact while enjoying the water. We know that boaters are strong, clean boating advocates, and we firmly believe that any new mandatory management practices must be based in science, and should be practical, realistic, and economical. That’s why we need boaters to speak out now.”

To hear boater’s concerns and suggestions, the EPA has set up two ways to communicate:

1. Boaters can be heard at the agency’s alternative weekly online webinars that started March 21 and end April 25. To find out the dates and to register for these online listening sessions go to:

<http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/lawsguidance/cwa/vessel/CBA/participate.cfm>

2. Boaters can also email the EPA directly at CleanBoatingAct-HQ@EPA.GOV up until June 2.

The EPA is looking at several broad categories of vessel discharges including the use of anti-fouling paints and zincs, grey water (from showers and sinks), bilge water (with concern about oil and grease, which is already illegal to discharge), the use of cleaning products, disposal of garbage and fishing waste, and the transport of invasive species.

The Clean Boating Act law requires the EPA to consider many factors when developing these management practices, including the type of the discharge and its environmental affect, any effects on operation or safety, economic costs, international standards, and applicability to state or federal law.

The Agency also held a listening session in Annapolis, MD, which BoatUS attended. "The EPA shared with us that they expect to use some of the more common clean boating techniques already found in some areas," said Podlich. "However, no specific proposal or required action was presented, so more details are elusive. As a result, boaters need to stay tuned to what EPA is planning and make their voices heard in these listening sessions."

For more information on the Clean Boating Act of 2008, go to www.BoatUS.com/gov/cba. For clean boating tips and techniques visit the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water's clean boating web page at BoatUS.com/foundation/cleanwater.

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About BoatUS:

BoatUS – Boat Owners Association of The United States – is the nation's leading advocate for recreational boaters providing over half a million members with government representation, programs and money-saving services. For membership information visit www.BoatUS.com or call 800-395-2628.