

Massachusetts Clean Vessel Act Program

The Clean Vessel Act of 1992

Passed by Congress to help reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges - it provided an opportunity for states to apply for funds (25% recipient/75% federal) for the construction, renovation, operation and maintenance of boat pumpout and waste reception facilities at both public and private marinas.



The **Massachusetts Clean Vessel Act (CVA) Program** has been administered by the Division of Marine Fisheries since 1994. It is built around two basic principles: making pumpouts both **free** and **convenient**.

One of the first states to provide free pumpout facilities for recreational boaters through the Act, we have put more pumpout boats in service than any other state. In 1998, in recognition of our enlightened and innovative implementation of the CVA program, the States Organization for Boating Access awarded Massachusetts a "**State CVA Excellence Award**."

Use of our pumpouts benefits public health and the sensitive fisheries resources and habitats of the Commonwealth!

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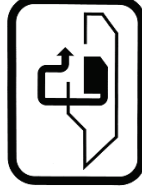


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Commissioner Mary B. Griffin

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Governor Deval Patrick



**OVER 3 MILLION GALLONS
PUMPED**



**KEEP OUR WATER
CLEAN ~ USE
PUMPOUTS**

This brochure is produced by the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and is funded with Sport Fish Restoration funds through a grant from the USFWS Clean Vessel Act Grant Program

What's in Your Water?



Photo by Allison Leschen

Sensitive Resources

Fish - Our coastal estuaries, shallow water embayments, and nearshore waters are designated as Essential Fish Habitat for over 30 federally managed species and all of the 38 species managed by the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils. These species include **cod**, **haddock**, **winter flounder**, **mackerel**, **bluefish**, and **black sea bass**. Most are dependent on the state's estuaries for spawning, larval development and/or maturation during the peak of the recreational boating season. Many have populations that are at a fraction of their historic levels. Inshore habitat degradation has been cited as one of the critical factors causing stock declines.

Shellfish - Our state waters include 1.7 million acres of classified shellfish growing area waters sustaining such species as **soft shell clams**, **quahogs**, **American oysters**, **blue mussels**, **sea scallops**, & **bay scallops**.

Seagrass - For many commercially and recreationally important species, **eelgrass** has been documented as critical habitat for one or many stages of their life cycle. With an estimated 39,258 acres, Massachusetts has more eelgrass than any other New England state.

150,000 Registered Boats

One potential contributor to the degradation of water quality in Massachusetts' coastal waters is the discharge of **pollutants** from recreational boats. Sanitary waste discharges from boats contribute a variety of pollutants to coastal waters. Vessel sewage can be over **10 times** more concentrated than domestic sewage. Raw municipal sewage has a lower concentration because more water is used in land based sanitary disposal systems than in those used on board boats. In addition, municipal collection systems are subject to inflow and infiltration of storm water.

Sewage wastes contain harmful **bacteria**, **viruses** and **protozoa**. Even small amounts of microorganisms from sewage wastes can introduce **diseases** like hepatitis to people in contact with the water. Shellfish can convey nearly all waterborne pathogens to humans. Shellfish are filter feeders that eat tiny food particles filtered through their gills and into their stomachs, along with bacteria from sewage.

*To learn more about our program please
feel free to view our web site at:
<http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries> and
click on "Clean Vessel Act"*

Sewage wastes contain nutrients such as **nitrogen** and **phosphorous**. Excessive nutrient loading can be a problem in poorly flushed embayments because it stimulates algal growth and contributes to reductions in dissolved oxygen. Both of these conditions can decrease the survivorship and reproductive potential of fish, shellfish, and sea grasses.

Chemicals added to marine sanitation devices as disinfectants can contain toxic **chlorine**, **formaldehyde**, and **zinc** compounds.

Where to Pump Out

The **Mass CVA Program** currently has 79 participating public and private marinas offering **free** pumpout services with 62 pumpout vessels and 50 shoreside stations. Program operators and other pumpout services can be found at:

<http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dmf/programsandprojects/cvabig.htm>

Or, contact our office or your local harbormaster for pumpout locations.



Photo by Ed Lyman