

No Discharge Area Guide

The State of Maine is committed to protecting public health and the environment by working to eliminate bacterial contamination in our surface waters. Designating “No Discharge Areas” (NDA) where sewage discharges from boats are prohibited is a key part of our strategy to address this problem.

Maine has a number of new No Discharge Areas in addition to Casco Bay, which was designated in 2006. No Discharge Areas in Maine are as follows:

- **Boothbay Region NDA** includes all waters north of a line from Cape Newagen in Southport to Ocean Point in Boothbay including Linekin Bay and Townsend Gut.
- **Casco Bay NDA** includes all waters of Casco Bay.
- **Kennebunk-Wells NDA** includes all waters north of a line from Moody Point in Wells to Cape Arundel in Kennebunkport including the Webhannet and Kennebunk Rivers to head of navigation.
- **Southern Mount Desert NDA** includes all waters north of a line from Bass Harbor Head in Tremont to Bakers Island in Cranberry Isles and west of a line from Bakers Island to Otter Point in Mount Desert.
- **West Penobscot Bay NDA** includes all waters west of a line from Owls head to Northeast Point in Camden.

A NDA application is under development for the “border waters,” which include all coastal waters from the NH border to York Harbor, including the Salmon Falls River to the head of navigation and York Harbor.

Additional No Discharge Areas are being planned. When in doubt, look for signs, consult a local marina or harbormaster, or just use your holding tank.

The discharge of untreated sewage is a violation of federal and state law. Please preserve Maine’s beautiful waters by using your holding tank.

Be sure to visit Maine’s Certified Clean Boatyards and Marinas.

Health Protection

Sewage wastes discharged from boats degrade water quality by introducing disease-causing microorganisms, nutrients, and chemicals into the marine environment.

- Microorganisms, which include viruses and bacteria, may introduce diseases like hepatitis and gastroenteritis to people in contact with the water. Microorganisms may also contaminate shellfish beds and cause beach closures.
- Nutrients are necessary for the growth of both microscopic and larger plants (seaweeds and eelgrass). However, when nutrients become too abundant they stimulate algae blooms which may lead to the loss of eelgrass and depletion of oxygen in water (called hypoxia).

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Hypoxia can stress and even kill fish and other aquatic animals.

- Chemical products can be toxic to marine and estuarine life and could pose a problem in areas where boats congregate and where there is little tidal flushing.

What is a NDA?

A No Discharge Area is a designated body of water where the discharge of treated and untreated boat sewage is prohibited (does not include grey water). Under the federal Clean Water Act it is illegal to discharge untreated (raw) sewage from a vessel in US waters.

Marine Sanitation Devices (Boat Toilets)

Recreational boats are not required to be equipped with a toilet, but if they are, the Marine Sanitation Device (MSD) must be Coast Guard approved. The approved design requires the MSDs to hold sewage for shore-based disposal or treat the sewage prior to discharge. There are three types of MSDs:

- TYPE I: MSDs discharge treated effluent having a fecal coliform bacterial count not greater than 1,000 per 100 milliliters of water and no visible floating solids.
- TYPE II: MSDs discharge treated effluent having a fecal coliform bacterial count less than 200 per 100 milliliters and suspended solids not greater than 150 milligrams per liter.
- TYPE III: MSDs are devices designed to store sewage (usually with disinfectants and deodorants added) until it can be pumped out at a pump-out facility or discharged outside the territorial sea boundary of three miles from shore. These are also known as holding tanks.

Boat Waste in a No Discharge Area

When operating in No Discharge Area, Type I, Type II, and Type III Marine Sanitation Devices cannot be discharged. In No Discharge Areas, the US Coast Guard regulations state MSDs Type I, Type II and Type III must be secured to prevent discharge.

A Type I, Type II, and Type III MDS must be secured when operating in a No Discharge Area. This can be done by closing the seacock and padlocking it, using a non-releasable wire tie, or removing the seacock handle (with the seacock closed). Type I and Type II can also be secured by locking the toilet door handle.

For More Information:

www.epa.gov/region01/eco/nodiscrg

Maine: www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docgrant/pumpout.htm

Clean Vessel Act: www.fws.gov/r5fedaid/



**Look for this CVA symbol
to find pump-out facilities!**

