



ALASKA BOATERS TIP SHEET

Cleaning Boats

Cleaning Boats in Alaska's Harbors!

Every mariner is aware that cleaning and maintenance is a part of owning a boat. These activities ensure safe and efficient operations at sea, but can have adverse impacts on human health, aquatic life and the water quality of Alaska's harbors.

Many of the products that are used in boat maintenance have toxic and corrosive components. Avoiding these products or using them responsibly can reduce the impacts that may affect your health and the health of our marine resources.

To keep more of what we want in the water, keep these tips in mind to keep the toxics out of the water:

- ◆ Minimize the use of corrosive and toxic cleaners. If you have to use these products, familiarize yourself and your crew with their correct use, handling, and disposal.
- ◆ Be an educated consumer and read the labels. Key words on labels are: DANGER, WARNING and CAUTION. "Danger" means extremely flammable, corrosive or toxic, "warning" implies it is moderately hazardous, "caution" indicates less hazardous products. If it's possible, choose products that are less hazardous.
- ◆ Use less toxic alternative cleaners that may require a little more elbow grease, but are usually less expensive and less toxic to you and the environment. See the list below of typical cleaners and their alternatives.
- ◆ Avoid products that contain ammonia, bleach, chlorinated solvents, petroleum distillates and lye – all common products that are toxic to marine life.
- ◆ Keep the finish on your vessel clean and well-maintained to resist dirt.
- ◆ Use frequent soft cleanings of the deck and hull to avoid abrasive cleanings. Wash down your vessel frequently with water and sponges.

- ◆ Limit the use of detergents or soaps and use phosphate-free soaps. Soaps have impact on habitat by limiting the ability of aquatic animals to breathe. The suds that are produced by excessive soap don't do anything – they aren't needed for effective cleaning!
- ◆ Collect wastes and properly dispose of them ashore. Use dust collection systems when sanding to minimize the introduction of paint chips into the environment.

Safe Alternatives . . .



Instead of Buying THIS Cleaner:	. . . Use This SAFE Alternative!
Glass Cleaners	Apply vinegar with newspaper and then buff with dry newspaper. It really works!!!
Grease Cutters	Use lemon juice, vinegar, or sprinkle with borax and scrub with scrub brush.
Powdered Bleach	Sprinkle Borax on stains and scrub!
Toilet Cleaners	Liquid castile soap and baking soda or Borax and a toilet brush.
All Purpose Cleaners	Liquid castile soap and baking soda or Borax in different ratios will clean many things. Use very little soap and soda/borax and lots of water on floors, walls and counters. Use more soap, soda/Borax for tubs sinks, cat boxes, anything that will be rinsed.

