

Take the Ohio Clean Boater Pledge

"I pledge to be an Ohio Clean Boater and follow Best Boater Practices (BBPs) to keep oil, sewage, toxic boat cleaning and maintenance products, plastics, cigarette butts and other trash, fishing gear and invasive species out of the water."

Pledge on line at www.ohiocleanboater.osu.edu and receive a special thank you from the Ohio Clean Boater Program staff. Follow the Clean Boater and Clean Marina guidelines and rules.

Support Clean Marinas

The Ohio Clean Boater Program is part of the Ohio Clean Marinas Program. The Ohio Clean Marinas Program is a proactive partnership designed to encourage marinas and boaters to use simple, innovative solutions to keep Ohio's coastal and inland waterway resources clean. The Program assists boaters and marinas in protecting the resources that provide their livelihood—clean water and fresh air.



For information on the Ohio Clean Marinas program, contact Colleen Wellington at wellington.28@osu.edu or visit ohiocleanmarina.osu.edu.

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Sponsor Information

The Ohio Sea Grant College Program is developing the Ohio Clean Marinas Program in partnership with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Soil and Water Conservation (Ohio Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program), Office of Coastal Management (Ohio Coastal Management Program), and Division of Watercraft; Ohio Department of Health; Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; Ohio Department of Commerce, State Fire Marshall Division; U.S. Coast Guard; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Lake Erie Marine Trades Association, Greater Cleveland Boating Association, local health departments, local fire marshals, and marina and yacht club owners and managers.

The Ohio Clean Marinas Program is being developed with financial assistance provided by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, administered by the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration through the ODNR – Office of Coastal Management and Division of Soil and Water Conservation to Ohio Sea Grant.

The support and patronage of boaters is key to the success of the Ohio Clean Marinas Program.

The Program has received a grant from the Lake Erie Protection Fund, Ohio Lake Erie Commission to develop a clean boater program as a component of the Clean Marinas Program.

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Photos by Gene Wright



Best Boater Practices

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Best Boater Practices

Best boater practices are the first steps to a successful Clean Marinas Program in Ohio. Next time you're boating, make the following a habit.

Fueling & Engine Maintenance

- Fill fuel tanks upon departing rather than returning, and avoid filling above 90% capacity (listen to the filler pipe). These practices will reduce spills caused by thermal expansion.
- Use oil absorbent materials around the fuel nozzle and fuel vent.
- Minimize fuel consumption [See side box].
- Keep the engine well tuned. Make sure your motor does not leak gas or oil.
- Remove oil from the bilge before discharge. Place an oil absorbent cushion in the bilge.
- For oil changes, use a non-spill pump system (available at many marinas). Slip a bag over the filter before removing. Recycle or dispose of oil as hazardous waste.
- Winterize only with the less toxic propylene glycol antifreeze.

Boat Cleaning, Painting & Sanding

- Wash boat frequently with a sponge or nonabrasive pad, plain water, and some "elbow-grease."
- Consider waxing the boat to prevent surface dirt from becoming ingrained.
- Use legal bottom paints (avoid toxic TBT paints). Use water-based paints when possible.
- Conduct painting and sanding in a designated area away from the water.
- Contain and collect paint chips, dust, and debris and dispose of the waste in the regular trash or a designated receptacle at a marina.



Waste Management

- Secure trash in a garbage or recycling receptacle on board and dispose of it properly on shore.
- DO NOT discharge human waste directly into the water.
- NEVER discard fishing line, cigarette butts, fish waste, or any other waste overboard.
- Minimize disposable plastic products brought on board. Plastic products can be harmful to aquatic birds and animals, tangle boat props, clog intakes, and litter beaches.
- Invest in a reusable boat cover or recycle your shrink-wrap.

Invasive Species Control

Aquatic invasive plants and animals threaten the abundance and diversity of our native species. They can dominate native habitats and disrupt the function of natural systems. Impacts to recreational users include deteriorated boat hulls, tangled propellers, and a decline in sport fish populations. Below are a few practices that boaters can follow to help prevent their spread.

Upon leaving a body of water:

1. Drain all water from the boat.
2. Remove visible debris (mud, plants, critters, etc.)
3. Wash the boat and trailer and allow to dry in the sun for 4-6 hours.
4. Clean and dry all else that came in contact with the water (clothes, pets, fishing gear, scuba gear and wetsuits, etc.)

NEVER transfer bait fish or any plants or animals from one body of water to another.

Fuel Saving Tips

1. **Shed the pounds** – Reducing boat weight generally increases mileage (1 gal water ~8 lbs; 1 gal gas ~6 lbs).
2. **Practice balance** – Uneven weight distribution causes improper trim, reducing efficiency.
3. **Travel the most direct route** – Make sure your boat's compass is properly calibrated, and consider using a global positioning system (GPS).
4. **Follow the path of least resistance** – Look for calm waters and avoid fighting waves. Remove unnecessary obstructions to reduce wind resistance.
5. **Find the engine's sweet spot** – Throttle back. The maximum speed is rarely the most efficient.
6. **Use "prop"er adjustments** – Choose the right propeller type and configuration for your boat.
7. **Keep the hull clean** – Wash the hull often to remove attached vegetation and fouling organisms, which cause friction.
8. **Don't "exhaust" yourself** – If the exhaust is black, white, or blue, the engine is probably not operating at peak efficiency. Service the engine regularly.
9. **Consider engine alternatives** – Use a trolling motor for fishing, perhaps even an electric one. Consider purchasing a fuel-efficient engine or a boat equipped with alternative energy options, such as solar panels.
10. **Boat pool** – Boat pooling not only saves fuel, it reduces wear and tear, and provides a layer of safety should something go wrong.

