



TAKE ME FISHING™

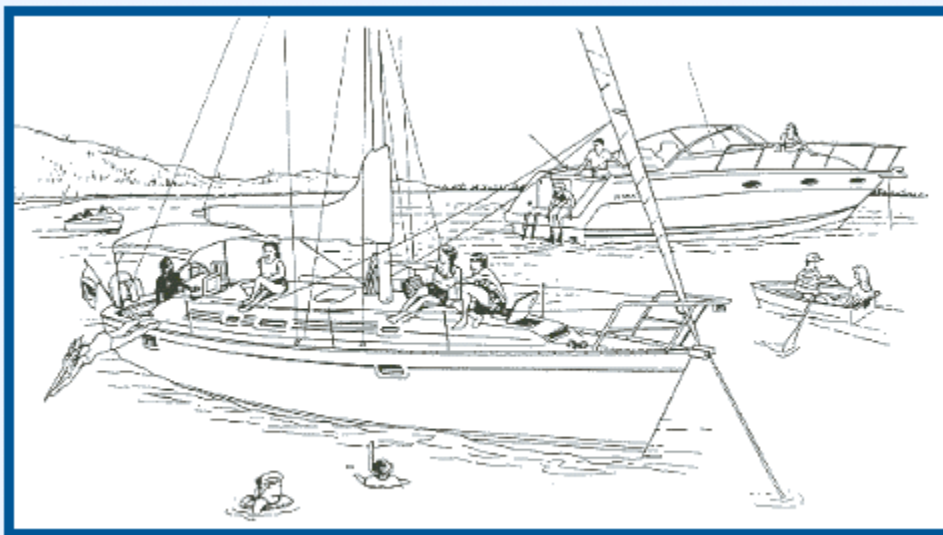
The Sewage Subject

Onboard sewage management is not a fun thing to think about, but it is a necessary part of your boat's systems. Over the last few years, there has been significant attention in the boating press about onboard heads, marine sanitation devices, portable toilets, and the availability of onshore pumpout stations. Here's a quick overview of the issues, as well as the laws relating to this subject.



Why Should I Care?

No one wants to think about settling down in the cockpit after putting the anchor down and glancing out on the water to see floating toilet paper go by. However, if boaters follow existing laws, this won't occur. You can help take care of our harbors and other waters by following the law and making sure that your boat's MSD is working.



The Law

Federal law says that untreated sewage (even if it's been dosed with a deodorant product) can NOT be discharged in U.S. waters out to 3 miles offshore. This means the sewage from a portable toilet or a Type III holding tank can not be discharged unless you are in the ocean more than 3 miles offshore. You are not required to have a toilet/head on your boat. (In fact, many people choose to have a portable toilet on their boat.) However, if you do have an installed toilet on your boat, you must have a USCG

certified MSD Type I, II, or III attached to that toilet. Federal law states that if you have a holding tank for untreated waste with a "Y" valve, it must be secured in the closed position while operating in U.S. waters. Using a non-releasable wire tie, padlock, or removal of the valve handle is considered adequate securing of the device.

What Can I Do?

- When tied up to a dock, use onshore facilities. Encourage guests to take advantage of the onshore restrooms before you set out for a day trip to reduce the amount of waste you need to worry about on your boat.
- Make sure your boat has a working MSD, and regularly maintain it and the attached plumbing. Where possible, install the best hose you can afford to reduce odors.
- Pump out before you haul your boat for the winter.

Did you know?....there are federal funds (from the Clean Vessel Act) currently available to the states to install more pumpout stations for boaters.