

Facility Cleaning

Potential Environmental Impacts:

Many common cleaning products contain hazardous chemicals that with repeated or excessive contact may lead to lung problems, brain and nerve damage, cancer and even death. Hazardous chemicals can often be found in drain cleaners, floor-care products, window sprays, and bathroom cleaners. Those labeled “DANGER” or “POISON” are typically most hazardous. Others may be labeled “CAUTION” or “WARNING” because they are skin or eye irritants. Less hazardous alternatives for common cleaning products are often labeled “non toxic.”

Legal Requirements:

- There are no legal requirements to use environmentally preferable products. Note that waste cleaning products must be disposed of in accordance with the hazardous waste disposal requirement. See Appendix B.

Best Management Practices:

- ☼ Use cleaning products which may have less of an impact on the environment because they are less toxic and contain lower concentrations of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), ozone depleting chemicals (ODCs), and/or carcinogens.
- ☼ Read product labels. Avoid cleaning products with:
 - ✗ alcohol
 - ✗ ammonia
 - ✗ bleach
 - ✗ butyl cellosolve
 - ✗ cresol
 - ✗ dye
 - ✗ ethanol
 - ✗ formaldehyde
 - ✗ glycols
 - ✗ hydrochloric acid
 - ✗ hydrofluoric acid
 - ✗ lye
 - ✗ naphthalene
 - ✗ PDCBs (paradichlorobenzenes)
 - ✗ perchloroethylene
 - ✗ petroleum distillates
 - ✗ phenol
 - ✗ phosphoric acid
 - ✗ propellants
 - ✗ sulfuric acid
 - ✗ TCE (trichloroethylene)
- ☼ Depending on the cleaning job, always try cleaning with water and a coarse cloth first. Clean more often with fresh water only. If you must use a cleaner, use the product sparingly.
- ☼ Consider non-toxic alternatives for cleaning products. Even non-toxic substances can cause temporary harm to the environment and should therefore be used sparingly. Some non-toxic alternatives to typical cleaning products are:

ALL PURPOSE CLEANER	Mix one cup white vinegar with two gallons water.
AIR FRESHENER	Leave out an open box of baking soda.
AMMONIA-BASED CLEANERS	Vinegar, salt, and water.
BRASS CLEANER	Worcestershire sauce. Or paste made with equal amounts of salt, vinegar, and water.

COPPER CLEANER	Lemon juice and water. Or paste of lemon juice, salt, and flour.
CHLORINE BLEACH	Baking soda and water. Or borax.
CHROME CLEANER/POLISH	Apple cider vinegar to clean; baby oil to polish.
DISINFECTANTS	One half a cup borax in one gallon of water.
DRAIN OPENER	Dissemble and use a plumber's snake. Or flush with boiling water mixed with one quarter cup baking soda and one quarter cup vinegar.
FIBERGLASS STAIN REMOVER	Baking soda paste.
FLOOR CLEANER	One-cup vinegar plus two gallons of water.
STAINLESS STEEL CLEANER	Baking soda or mineral oil for polishing, vinegar to remove spots.
TOILET BOWL CLEANER	Use toilet brush and baking soda.
WOOD POLISH	Olive or almond oil (interior walls only)
WINDOW CLEANER	Mix two tablespoons vinegar in one quart of water or rub glass with newspaper.

Sources: Buller (1995) and MA Department of Environmental Management, Environmental Hazards Management Institute.

Checklist for Clean Marina Certification:

- ✓ Do you reduce the use of toxic cleaners for cleaning your facility by changing practices or products?

YES NO N/A