

Fish Waste

Potential Environmental Impacts:

Too much fish waste in a poorly circulated marina basin can lower oxygen levels in the water. As the waste decomposes; it can lead to foul odor and fish kills. Floating fish parts are also an unsightly addition to marina waters.

Legal Requirements:

- Local harbor management ordinances might prohibit the discharge of fish waste within the jurisdiction of the harbor management plan. Check with local harbor management commission, if applicable.
- Disposal of fish waste into an enclosed water body may be a violation of the local health code. Check with your municipal or regional director of health.

Best Management Practices:

- ✦ Prohibit disposal of fish waste in the marina basin. Post signs displaying the rules.
- ✦ Do not permit fish cleaning on docks and floats.
- ✦ Install a fish cleaning station at your marina.
- ✦ Clearly identify the fish cleaning stations with signs that list the rules and regulations for their use.
- ✦ Direct rinsewater from fish cleaning areas to a sand filter or sanitary sewer. It should be free of solids.
- ✦ Use one of the following disposal methods:
 - Compost fish waste where appropriate and use compost on landscaping. See “Landscaping” fact sheet for more information.
 - Encourage boaters to freeze fish parts and reuse them as bait or chum on the next fishing trip. Use a grinder to make chum out of fish carcasses. Freeze and sell chum at marina store.
 - If composting or freezing is not an option, encourage boaters to double-bag their fish parts and throw out in their regular trash.
- ✦ Encourage boaters to clean fish offshore where the fish are caught and discard of the fish in unrestricted waters, unless there are length limits for the type of fish caught.

Checklist for Clean Marina Certification:

- ✓ Do you prohibit disposal of fish waste in the marina basin, and/or provide for proper disposal of fish waste?

YES NO N/A