

## Risks of Sewage Discharge

Sewage from boats can be a health hazard to bathers in popular boating areas. Furthermore, it compromises the health, biodiversity and aesthetics of Bermuda's marine environment. The 'twin pillars' of Bermuda's economy are its international business and tourism industries, both of which are dependent on Bermuda maintaining a pristine environment.

The addition of sewage to shallow, near-shore marine environments can cause dissolved oxygen concentrations to drop. This effect can be more significant in enclosed water bodies and may be one of the potential causes of fish-kills or fish die-offs generally observed over the hotter months in Bermuda.

## Other Sources of Pollution from Recreational Boats

**Bilgewater:** Fuels and oils within the bilgewater can be pumped into the sea from automatically-operated bilgewater pumps. Using oil adsorbent materials firmly attached within the bilge can help prevent this. Government is committed to the use of oil adsorbent materials by removing importation duty on them (CPC 4195). Used oil absorbents should be disposed of in your general household trash.

**Antifoulant Ablative Paint:** Do not clean your boat hull whilst near-shore within these exclusion zones.

**Zinc Anodes and Batteries:** Properly dispose of zinc anodes and batteries at the designated sites in the marina or at the Tynes Bay public drop off facility.

## Reporting Pollution

If you notice anything unusual, such as dead fish, oil slick or suspected sewage discharge in the near-shore, or if you observe anyone violating these guidelines, please notify the Department of Environment & Natural Resources as soon as possible. If possible, please take photographs of the observed issue. Your report will be treated in strict confidence.

# SEWAGE MANAGEMENT for Boat Owners

## Contact Details

For more information, to discuss this document, to log a complaint or to report an observed incident of sewage or oil being discharged from a boat, please contact the Department of Environment & Natural Resources at:

**Email:** [PollutionControl@gov.bm](mailto:PollutionControl@gov.bm)

**Tel:** 239-2303 or 239-2356 or 239-2318



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA  
Ministry of Health, Seniors and Environment

**Department of Environment and Natural Resources**



The following guidelines provide solutions or alternative practices to reduce the risk of pollution to our marine environment from the discharge of sewage from boats.

The Department of Environment & Natural Resources is responsible for ensuring all persons, including boat owners and boat users, do not pollute or foul seawater.

These guidelines **apply to recreational boats, liveaboards, charter boats and all other boats that sail or motor in and around Bermuda.** Boats and ships engaged in international voyages and registered to carry more than 15 persons, or of 400GT or greater, shall abide by the *Bermuda Merchant Shipping (Prevention of Pollution by Sewage and Garbage from Ships) Regulations 2015 (BR44/2015)* and shall not discharge untreated sewage within 12 nautical miles from the nearest land.

In Bermuda, any person who interferes with, pollutes or fouls any public water (including seawater), commits an offence punishable under the Water Resources Act 1975 (Section 34).



You may only discharge sewage overboard when beyond 500 metres (1,640ft) from the nearest point of land. Also from 2017 you may not discharge sewage into the Great Sound, Little Sound, Harrington Sound and Castle Harbour.

**Boats with Toilet and Holding Tank**

When in near-shore waters (i.e. <500 metres), the toilet shall be connected directly to the holding tank (i.e. not in bypass). Holding tanks should be emptied at shore-side or mobile pump-out facilities or when outside the no-sewage discharge zones (i.e. greater than 500 metres from nearest point of land, see Figure 1).

**Boats with Toilet ONLY (i.e No holding tank)**

Only use the toilet when outside of near-shore waters. Alternatively, for use in near-shore waters add a 'Porta-Potty' to collect and hold the sewage instead of using a fixed toilet. 'Porta-Potty's' can be emptied at shore-side or mobile facilities, at home or when outside the no-sewage discharge zones (i.e. greater than 500 metres from nearest point of land, see Figure 1)

- No Sewage Discharge (500 metres from coastline)
- No Sewage Discharge from January 1st, 2017

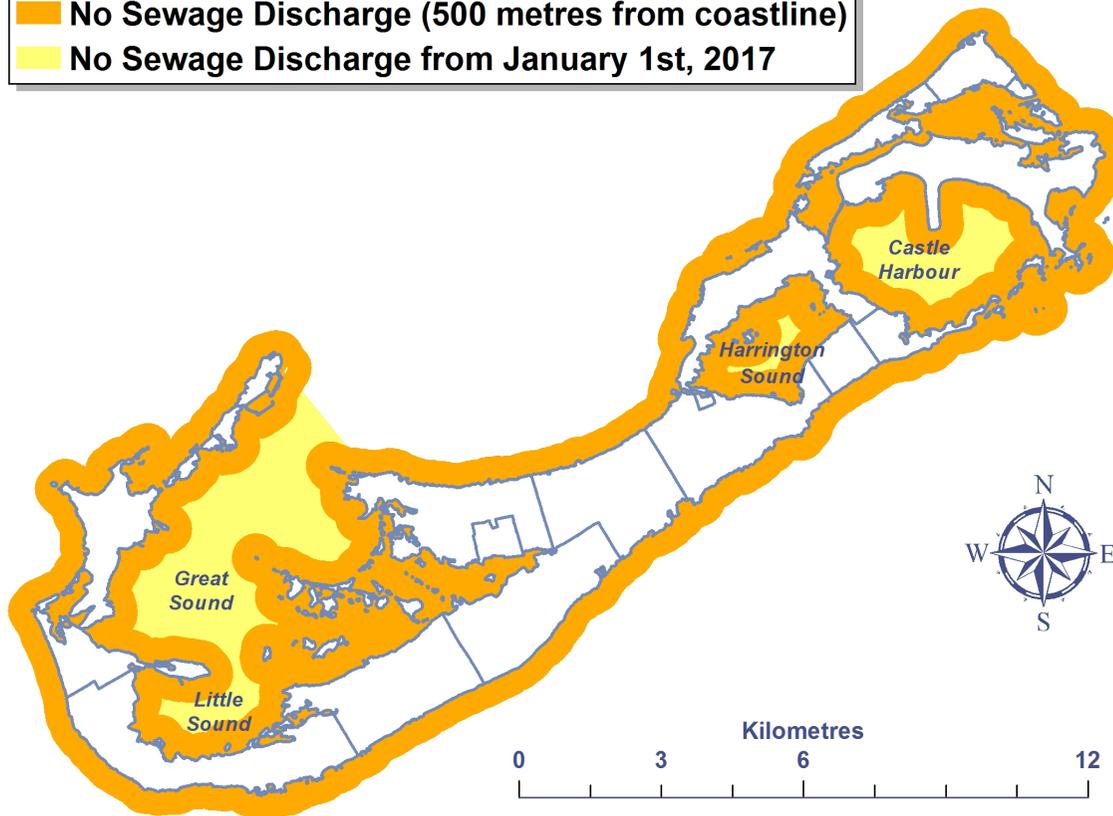


Figure 1 No Sewage discharge area

## Where do I find a Shore-Side Sewage Disposal Facility?

Coming soon! The installation of shore-side pump-out facilities requires a demand from boat owners to use such facilities.

### Marina and Shore-Side Facility owners

If you are interested in providing shore-side or mobile sewage pump-out facilities, ahead of regulatory requirements, then this would help to expedite the introduction of a workable solution for sewage management on boats.

Contact the Department of Environment & Natural Resources to discuss how a shore-side pump-out facility or mobile sewage pump-out system can be operated and connected to a sewer main, septic tank and disposal borehole or collect & hold tank.