

**Image: Battery.png**

Batteries contain heavy metals such as mercury, lead, cadmium, and nickel, which contaminate the environment if improperly disposed. More than 98% of all battery lead is recycled, and between 60%-90% of the lead and plastic are reclaimed and used to produce new batteries, keeping them out of our landfills, waters, and away from the marine environment.

Choosing the right size battery for your boat and performing routine maintenance will ensure the optimal lifespan of your battery, and save you money.

- Check your engine manual for the recommended battery rating, and choose the best battery based on your needs and budget.
- At the beginning of the boating season, charge and check for connection corrosion.
- Never mix old batteries with new ones – the old batteries tend to pull down the new ones.
- When not in use, disconnect the battery.
- Look into renewable energy options to trickle charge your batteries.
- At the end of the season, remove batteries for storage, clean top surfaces, grease terminal bolts, and store in a dry, cool place.

When it's finally time to dispose of your battery, check with your marina or boatyard for recycling options first! Some marinas may even offer you a credit towards purchasing a new battery. You may also find recycling options by contacting your [solid waste management district](#) or local automotive store.

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**Image: Cleaning.png**

If the warmer weather has you itching to dust off your boat and prepare it for some fun in the sun, follow these best management practices to keep our waters and your boat clean!

- Choose products that carry the [Safer Choice label](#) and do not contain harsh chemicals such as chlorine, bleach, ammonia, lye, and phosphates.
  - If possible, use cleaning products that are environmentally friendly (e.g., non-toxic or phosphate-free). Always follow the instructions on the label. Beware of biodegradable cleaners that may still be toxic.
  - Keep your boat waxed. A good coat of wax will prevent surface dirt from being ingrained in the hull and makes your boater easier to clean later. Frequent cleanings reduce the need for harsh chemicals later.
  - Wash your boat above the waterline by hand with a sponge and plain water. Paint chips can be displaced into the water where they can potentially cause harm to fish and other organisms.
  - After each trip, try a water-only wash down to rinse your boat and trailer.
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**Image: Covers.png**

Investing in a reusable boat cover is an often-overlooked easy environmental choice. While shrink wrap seals a boat from creature intrusion and inclement weather, many boaters are unaware of recycling opportunities offered by some shrink wrap suppliers. As a result, shrink wrap often ends up in our landfills.

In addition to minimizing your environmental footprint, reusable boat covers can save you money. While they may cost more initially, a reusable polyester cover, for example, typically lasts 10-12 years. Zippers and ties can be added to your reusable cover, making it even easier to access your boat to perform routine maintenance, especially during the winter.

When it comes time to put your boat away for the season, and the next, choose to reuse!

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**Image: Drip.png**

Filling up our tanks is the most common way that we unintentionally pollute our waters. A single cup of spilled oil can contaminate an area the size of a football field! The cost to prevent a spill is significantly less than the cost to clean it up, so use these tips to help keep our waters clean:

1. Install drip pans under engines, generators, and transmissions to collect any drips throughout the season.
2. Use bilge socks or absorbent pads to collect floating oil and fuel in the bilge.
3. Maintain your boat's engine – check for leaking hoses, gaskets, and seals regularly.
4. Use an absorbent fuel bib at the intake when fueling to capture spills or drips.
5. Fuel portable gas tanks on shore where a spill is less likely to occur and easier to contain.
6. Never “top off” your tank. Fuel expands as it warms.
7. Learn more boating tips and become an [Indiana Clean Boater](#) today!

With care, all boaters can take steps to mitigate the risk of accidentally spilling oil or fuel while operating their vessel.

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**Image: Fishing.png**

Boating and fishing are intertwined. Just like boating, we must also do our best to protect our waters and aquatic life when fishing.

Fish waste can lead to water quality problems if not properly disposed of within a marina due to its sheltered environment. Although the death and decomposition of fish is a natural process in our waterways, the potential volume of fish waste generated during the heavy boating seasons and fishing tournaments can quickly overwhelm the natural environment if the

waste is simply tossed overboard.

When fishing, remember to clean fish on land, away from surface water, and NEVER dispose of fish waste in the marina basin. This will keep your marina cleaner, keep odors down, and reduce nuisance birds and pests. By properly disposing of fish waste, bait, or chum, you also reduce the risk of introducing invasive species to our waters.

Additionally, prevent ghost fishing by cleaning up fishing gear. Derelict fishing equipment, often referred to as “ghost gear,” is any discarded, lost, or abandoned fishing gear in the marine environment. It will continue to trap, entangle, and potentially kill marine life, smother habitats, and act as a hazard to navigation until it is properly cleaned up.

Remember, one fisherman is all it takes to change a lake for a lifetime.

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#### **Image: Holiday.png**

Boating this holiday? Make sure to protect our aquatic ecosystems! Pledge to become an [Indiana Clean Boater](#) and follow these best management practices while out on the water:

- Keep our waters free of litter and stow items on board until you can dispose of them properly back on land. Recycle when possible!
- Nip the drip and practice proper watercraft fueling.
- Help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species through clean fishing practices.
- Maintain your boat in an environmentally-sensitive manner, using cleaning products that are labeled as [Safer Choice](#).
- Do not operate boat in sensitive, shallow water habitat areas. Pay attention to “no wake zones.” Wakes can cause strong wave propagation that can erode shorelines or stir up bottom sediments in shallow areas. Vegetation can be disturbed both by erosion processes and sedimentation resulting from wakes.
- Lead by example! Take the Indiana Clean Boater Pledge today! #CleanBoatersAreIN

Remember to make boating this holiday, and every day, good, clean fun.

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#### **Image: Invasive.png**

Help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species! Before and after each trip, inspect your boat, trailer, and equipment, and act accordingly:

- Remove visible mud, plants, fish, or animals from your boat, trailer, or other equipment (anchor, centerboards, props, etc.) before leaving the water body.
- Clean, Drain, Dry -- all water from live wells, bilges, motor, transom, and other containers before leaving launch area.
- Wash your boat, trailer, and equipment thoroughly with hot water (140 degrees F) to remove plants and organisms that were not visible at the boat launch.

- Allow your boat to dry for a minimum of 5 days in a sunny location before transferring into a new body of water.
- Do not release bait or dispose of fish waste in the water.

It's up to all of us to keep our waters healthy. Learn more about how you can prevent the spread of invasive species and become an [Indiana Clean Boater](#) today!

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#### **Image: Maintenance.png**

One of the best ways to protect our local aquatic ecosystems is by proactively managing our vessels. This not only reduces harmful environmental impacts but will also extend the life of your engine and boat, as well as help to protect you while you're out on the water.

- Before each trip, inspect your boat for any leaks or damage. Quickly address any issues that arise.
- If your marina allows do-it-yourself boat maintenance on site, perform repairs and maintenance activities in designated areas and follow your marina's "yard rules."
- Don't clean below the waterline when in the water. Paint chips can be displaced into the water where they can potentially cause harm to fish and other organisms.
- Wash your boat above the waterline by hand with a sponge and plain water. Frequent cleanings reduce the need for harsh chemicals later.
- After each trip, try a water-only wash down to rinse your boat and trailer. Avoid using bleach, ammonia or lye. Choose products that carry the [Safer Choice label](#).
- Do **not** use solvent-based cleaning products. Some examples of cleaning solvents are acetone, methyl ethyl ketone, toluene, trichloroethylene (TCE), isopropyl alcohol, glycerin, and propylene glycol.

Preventative boat maintenance before and after each outing can be easily achieved by creating a checklist. Learn more tips on other environmentally-friendly practices for boaters and become an [Indiana Clean Boater](#) today!

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#### **Image: Marina.png**

No matter the size, any boatyard or marina can make a BIG splash in our boating communities by using best management practices to protect our aquatic resources and encouraging others to do the same. Indiana's Clean Marina Program is a voluntary, environmental stewardship program that recognizes marina operators and recreational boaters who protect coastal water quality by engaging in environmentally-sound operating and maintenance procedures.

Indiana Certified Clean Marinas offer a safer experience for boaters and protect our natural resources. Clean Marinas take steps to keep sewage and waste out of waterways, prevent gas leaks and spills, combat the spread of invasive species, and preserve and protect local ecosystems.

Ask your marina to become an Indiana Clean Marina today! You have the power to vote with your boat. [Choose Clean.](#)

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**Image: Pumpout.png**

When sewage is dumped into a lake, stream, or other surface water, there is a potential for disease-causing pathogens to enter the water. These pathogens pose a risk to swimmers, anglers, and other people coming into direct contact with the water. Not only is there a risk to humans, there is a risk to fish and other aquatic life. As sewage breaks down in the aquatic environment, the bacteria that feed upon the sewage consume large amounts of oxygen from the water column. This in turn reduces the amount of oxygen available for fish. To discharge of your sewage, use harbor pump-out stations and shore-side facilities. As a boater, you can be an active steward of our waters by implementing these practices:

- Before heading out on the lake, use the restroom facilities at the marina.
- Use the marina's pumpout or dump station. These should be well marked. If there is not a pumpout or dump station at the marina in which you launch, check with marina management. They may have a cooperative agreement to use another marina's pumpout station.
- Know your marine sanitation device to prevent accidental dumping.
- Follow the law—it is illegal to discharge sewage or waste into public waters.

Find a [pumpout location near you!](#)

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**Image: Recycle.png**

Dumping hazardous liquids into our waters is illegal and can harm aquatic life. A single quart of oil can cover a water surface area equivalent to nearly three football fields!

Recycle used oil, oil filters, antifreeze, and other fluids at your marina, or contact your [solid waste management district](#) or local automotive stores to determine the recycling services they offer.

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**Image: Tides.png**

Boat traffic and operation can have a significant impact on shallow water habitats. Boat wakes can have an erosive effect on shorelines and uproot submergent and emergent native aquatic plants. This leads to reduced habitat for fish and wildlife and increases suspended sediment loads. Suspended sediment reduces the amount of sunlight penetrating the water column, shading out submerged plants that are important to fish for habitat and oxygen production. As

the suspended sediments settle, they can smother fish nests and habitat. Excessive suspended sediments also give water an unpleasant brown coloration.

- Keep your watercraft away from sensitive, shallow water habitat areas and established “no boating” zones.
- When in a “no wake” zone, operate your watercraft at the slowest possible speed that allows you to maintain steering and make headway with minimal wake.
- Winch your watercraft onto boat trailers instead of power loading your boat onto the trailer. The strong current created by the boat’s propeller causes severe erosion and washout at the end of the ramp.

Learn more tips on other environmentally-friendly practices for boaters and become an [Indiana Clean Boater](#) today!

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### **Image: Trash.png**

Solid waste such as bottles, cans, fishing line, plastic bags and other waste can injure or kill aquatic life and birds by trapping or entangling them. Not only is trash unsightly, it can also foul props or water intakes of boats or other equipment and may take decades or centuries to decompose. Much of this waste can be significantly reduced with the simple act of recycling and a little common sense.

- Have a waste container on your boat. The best policy is to carry out what you carry in. You might consider going one step further and carry out any trash less thoughtful people may have left behind.
- Use recyclable containers and reusable bags. Minimize the use of plastic wrap and disposable bags while out on your boat. Purchase items in bulk to reduce the amount of packaging you need to discard in the first place.
- Don’t toss garbage, including cigarette butts, overboard.
- Secure possessions below deck so nothing is accidentally lost overboard. If trash blows overboard, make an effort to retrieve it.
- Use the marina’s trash cans and recycling bins and replace the lids after using them so that waste does not blow out of them.