

## Clean Boating Tips

- Fueling
  - Fuel slowly and carefully and watch the nozzle at all times
  - Never top off the tank; fuel only to 90% capacity
  - Listen for the gurgling sound warning the tank is almost full or use your hand to feel for increased air escaping as the tank reaches full
  - Use a bib or absorbent collar at the fuel intake to catch any drips
  - Install a fuel air separator along your vent line that allows air but not fuel to escape
  - Fuel portable tanks on shore
  - Have a trained attendant fuel your watercraft for you
  - Notify the marina or authorities for any spills into the water
  
- Bilges
  - Avoid discharging any water from the bilge that has an oily sheen
  - Use bilge socks or absorbent pads to collect floating oil and fuel in the bilge
  - Properly recycle or dispose of used absorbents
  - Maintain your boat's engine- no leaking hoses, gaskets or seals
  - Trailer your boat to an area that can contain or treat bilge water before removing the bilge or boat plugs
  - Install a bilge pump switch that leaves an inch or two of water in the bilge
  - Install a bilge water filter to your vessel's bilge to remove oil and fuel from the water
  - Do not use bilge cleaners when pumping to a water body as this only serves to disperse the oil into the water
  - Slip a plastic bag over filters before removing them to catch drips
  - Notify the marina or authorities for any spills into the water
  
- Spills into the water
  - If safe to do so, stop the flow immediately
  - For minor spills, clean it up with absorbent bibs or pads, and dispose of clean-up material properly
  - Never use detergents or emulsifiers to treat or disperse the spill. This is prohibited by federal law and may result in significant fines
  - Contact the authorities as necessary. Minimally, you should notify the local property manager, fire, and police if safety is a concern.
  - For larger reportable spills you should call (toll-free) the National Response Center at (800) 424-8802 and/or the IDEM Spill hotline at (888) 233-7745
  
- Sewage and Graywater
  - Follow the law- it is illegal to discharge sewage into public waters (*Indiana code 14-15-2-8*)
  - Before heading out, use the restroom facilities at the marina
  - Use the marina's pumpout or dump station. If there is not a pumpout where you launch check with marina management
  - Be sure to read and understand the maintenance and operation of your marine sanitation device
  - Use environmentally friendly additives in your device
  - Consider buying a portable toilet to contain raw sewage if you have a small vessel; empty these toilets at the pumpout or dump stations
  - Use shoreside showers, laundries, and other washing facilities when possible
  - Limit the use of soaps and detergents onboard and then only use low-nitrogen and phosphorous-free detergents

- **Boat Maintenance**
  - Recycle used oil filter, antifreeze, and other fluids at your marina or contact your local solid waste management district or local automotive store to determine what recycling services they offer
  - Trade in used batteries when purchasing new ones
  - If possible, purchase bilge switches that do not contain mercury
  - Manage used compact fluorescent light bulbs, which may contain mercury, in an environmentally sound manner
  - Use environmentally-friendly products such as antifreeze formulated with less toxic propylene glycol (instead of highly toxic ethylene glycol)
  - 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"
  - Use drip pans under engines when performing any maintenance work.  
Clean up all spills immediately
  
- **Boat Operation**
  - Keep your watercraft away from sensitive shallow water habitats and established "no boating" zones
  - When operating in a "no-wake" zone, operate your watercraft at the slowest speed (*idle speed or less per Indiana Code 14-15-3-17*) 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 propeller causes severe erosion and washout at the end of the ramp
  
- **Boat Cleaning**
  - When possible, clean as much of your boat as possible before launching it for the season
  - Wash the boat on land in a contained area where the wash water can be collected and treated
  - When washing your boat in the water, wash above the water line by hand with a sponge and plain water. Do this frequently enough and there may be no need for harsh chemicals
  - Use cleaning products that are environmentally friendly, non-toxic and phosphate free
  - Use cleaning products sparingly and only when "elbow grease" is not working
  - Avoid caustic cleaners such as bleach, ammonia, or lye. Do not use petroleum-based cleaning products. Check out alternative cleaners on the Indiana Clean Marina website at [www.in.gov/ideM/prevention/2412](http://www.in.gov/ideM/prevention/2412)
  - Keep your boat waxed. A good coat of wax helps prevent surface dirt from becoming ingrained in the hull and makes the boat easier to clean
  - Try not to clean below the waterline while the boat is in the water as antifouling paint chips may be dislodged which can potentially cause harm to fish and other organisms
  
- **Solid Waste**
  - Have a waste container on your boat; carry out what you carry in
  - Use recyclable containers and reusable bags while on your boat. Minimize the use of plastic bags and plastic wrap
  - Do not toss garbage overboard, including cigarette butts
  - Recycle or dispose of fishing line properly
  - Find out if your marina offers recycling options for shrink wrap used in winter storage
  - Properly dispose of unwanted waste chemicals by utilizing the household hazardous waste collection program in your community
  - Pick up after your dog and deposit the waste in a trash can or appropriate receptacle
  - Use the marina's trash cans and recycling bins and always replace the lids after using them to prevent trash from blowing out of them
  - Cut rings of plastic beverage holders prior to disposal

- Clean your fish at a fish cleaning station, not at the dock or off of your boat. Disposal of fish waste within the marina basin is prohibited. If there are no other disposal options, double bag the fish waste and deposit in the regular trash
- Avoid feeding wild birds including ducks, geese, and seagulls in the marina. The birds' waste can contaminate the waterway and create a mess on boats and walkways
- Aquatic Invasive Species
  - Before Leaving the Boat Launch
    - Inspect your boat, trailer and equipment and remove any plants, sediment and animals
    - Drain, on land, all water from the motor, livewell, bilge and transom well. Some invasive species may not be visible to the naked eye
    - Empty your bait bucket on land to help prevent the spread of invasive species and fish diseases
  - After Leaving the Boat Launch
    - Wash your boat, tackle, trailer and other equipment with 104° tap water or a high pressure sprayer to kill any exotic species not visible at the boat launch or, if hot water is not available use 100% vinegar or a 3.5% salt solution
    - If washing your boat with hot water, vinegar or a salt solution is not feasible, allow your boat and other equipment to thoroughly dry for at least five days before moving to another body of water. Some invasive species can survive for long periods of time out of water
  - Do not use fish parts as bait or chum. This practice helps prevent the spread of viral hemorrhagic septicemia and other fish diseases
  - Help prevent the spread of invasive species and fish diseases by not transferring fish, fish eggs or other aquatic organisms between waterways. Private pond owners who fish on Indiana's or other states' waterways would also benefit from the same advice
  - Learn what aquatic invasive species look like by viewing images at [www.IN.gov/dnr/3123.htm](http://www.IN.gov/dnr/3123.htm). Become familiar with Eurasian Watermilfoil, Round Goby, Zebra Mussel, Spiny Waterflea, Bighead Carp, Silver Carp, Phragmites and Purple Loosestrife, to name a few. Know which waterways are infested and report any new infestation to the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant at (217) 333-6444 or the Indiana Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) Division of Fish and Wildlife at (317) 232-4200
  - Talk with the staff of IDNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant for further recommendations on controlling the spread of aquatic invasive species and any permit requirements before applying any control methods

## Sources

*The maps included in this guidebook are geographic representations only.  
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Indiana Clean Marinas certified by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.  
Visit [www.idem.IN.gov/prevention/2445.htm](http://www.idem.IN.gov/prevention/2445.htm) for more details.

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