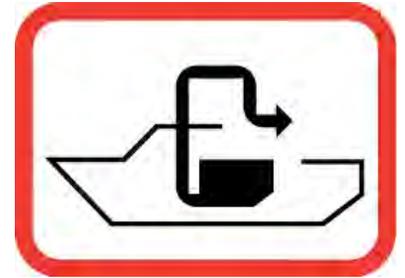


What is a No Discharge Zone?

A No Discharge Zone (NDZ) is a designated body of water where **discharging boat sewage, treated or untreated, is prohibited.**

NDZ designations ensure better water quality in our waterbodies, harbors, coves, and beaches.



Managing Boat Waste

Under the federal Clean Water Act, it's illegal to discharge untreated (raw) sewage from a vessel in waters within three miles of the shore and in navigable rivers.

Recreational boats are not required to be equipped with a toilet, but if they are, the Marine Sanitation Devices (MSDs) must be US Coast Guard approved. MSDs hold sewage for shore-based disposal or treat the sewage prior to discharge. There are three types of MSDs:

- **TYPE I:** MSDs discharge treated effluent having a fecal coliform bacterial count not greater than 1,000 per 100 milliliters of water and no visible floating solids.
- **TYPE II:** MSDs discharge treated effluent having a fecal coliform bacterial count of less than 200 per 100 milliliters and suspended solids not greater than 150 milligrams per liter.
- **TYPE III:** MSDs are devices designed to store sewage (usually with disinfectants and deodorants added) until it can be pumped out at a pumpout facility or discharged outside the territorial sea boundary of three miles from shore. These are commonly known as holding tanks.

Vessels **65 feet and under** may install a Type I, Type II, or Type III MSD. Vessels over 65 feet in length must install a Type II or Type III.

Portable toilets or "porta-potties" are not considered installed toilets and are not subject to the MSD regulations. They are however, subject to the disposal regulations, which prohibit the disposal of raw sewage within the three-mile limit.

What is Different When Operating in a No Discharge Zone?

Type III MSD's and "porta-potties" are the only sanitary equipment that can be used in a No Discharge Zone. These holding tanks can store sewage until the vessel arrives at a pumpout facility. Creation of a No Discharge Zone requires that there are adequate provision of pumpout facilities in a designated water body.

When operating in a NDZ, the US Coast Guard regulations state MSDs Type I and Type II must be secured to prevent discharge. Examples provided by the Coast Guard for securing Type I and Type II MSDs include closing the seacock and padlocking it, using a non-releasable wire tie, using a door handle lock, or removing the seacock handle (with the seacock closed).

Protecting our Health and our Environment

Sewage wastes discharged from boats introduce disease-causing microorganisms, nutrients, and chemicals into the marine environment.

- Microorganisms such as viruses, bacteria, and protozoans may introduce diseases like hepatitis and gastroenteritis to people in contact with the water and causing beach closures. They can contaminate shellfish beds and restrict harvesting.
- Nutrients are necessary for the growth of both microscopic and larger plants such as seaweeds and eelgrass. However, when nutrients become too abundant they stimulate algae blooms which may lead to the loss of eelgrass and depletion of oxygen in water. Depletion of oxygen in water (called hypoxia) can stress and even kill fish and other aquatic animals.
- Chemical products used in toilets and sanitation systems can be toxic to marine and estuarine life, especially in areas where boats congregate and where there is little tidal flushing.

Complying with vessel sewage discharge laws and regulations and using pumpout facilities, are necessary steps in protecting public health and the marine environment.

*Pumpout Facilities Map: <https://tinyurl.com/Pumpouts> OR [njboating.org](https://tinyurl.com/njboating.org)
For more information: <https://tinyurl.com/epaNDZ>*