



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

*The Lifeguarding Experts*

### **Water you play on...It's yours to protect.**

In the big picture, boaters are not a major contributor to decreasing water quality, but they are contributors, and certainly one of the user groups that get the most out of their time on the water. It is important for boaters to be aware of how they might contribute to pollution and to be extra diligent not to be part of the problem.

For example, just one litre of spilled gasoline can contaminate 20,000 litres of water, so when you are refuelling be careful to not spill a drop. Use a rag under the fuel nozzle to catch those errant drips. If you are fuelling from an approved portable container, use a funnel.

Another source of pollution is oily water from a messy bilge and the exhaust residue from old outboard engines. Keep your engine properly maintained and your bilges clean. If there is oil or excessive smoke, there is a problem with your engine and it should be fixed.

When scuffing your hull before applying a new coat of anti fouling bottom paint, use a drop cloth to catch the residue from sanding. If you are simply giving your boat a scrub and polish, plain water and a pressure cleaner does a good job. If you must use soap, only use products with an eco label identifying them as having a lower environmental impact.

And finally, when out on the water pack your garbage up and dispose of it on shore. Some of what you might otherwise throw overboard can instantly harm wildlife and in some cases may take hundreds of years to decompose.

Water is what boating is all about. The Lifesaving Society urges all boaters to do their part to keep water clean for their own enjoyment and the enjoyment of future generations. Go to [www.lifesaving.ca](http://www.lifesaving.ca) for more boating safety tips.

**311 words**