



Maryland Clean Boating Lesson Plan

Section 4 Vessel Cleaning and Maintenance

Vessel Cleaning: Environmental Concerns



- Boats require maintenance and cleaning.
- Cleaners can run-off directly into the waters.
- Boat cleaners can strip oil from fish gills, reducing their ability to breathe.
- Paints and chemicals are typically hazardous.
- Paint chips containing heavy metals could enter the water, and the food web

Vessel Cleaning: Clean Carefully

1. Rinse with fresh water after every trip.
2. When the boat is dirty, clean with fresh water and elbow grease first. Avoid soaps.
3. “Spot Clean” scuffs or stains and wipe up rather than hose soap into the water.
4. Wax the boat to prevent dirt from setting in.
5. Choose cleaners carefully.



Vessel Cleaning: Read Product Labels!

- Read product labels.
- Don't believe general "environmental" claims.
- Look for independent certifications such as "Green Seal" or EPA "Design for the Environment."



Alternatives to Toxic Products

Product

- Bleach
- Scouring powder
- General Cleaner
- Glass Cleaner
- Head and Shower Cleaner
- Chrome Cleaner

Alternative

- Borax
- Baking soda
- Baking soda and vinegar
- Vinegar and water
- Baking soda
- Apple cider vinegar

Maintain Mindfully



- Collect paint dust and chips.
- Use dustless sanders/grinders.
- Follow marina rules.
- Use low-toxic antifreeze (usually pink in color).
- Consult a professional to pick your bottom paint.
- Dispose of solvents and waste gas properly—accepted at household hazardous waste collection days.

Pass it On. “Pier Pressure”

- Let your friends know that your care about clean water and want to do your part.
- Share information you learn here with them.
- In a friendly way, use “Pier Pressure” to get them to help protect our waterways too.

