

# MARINA DEL REY HARBOR IN-WATER BOAT HULL CLEANING

## Best Management Practices (BMPs)



*Fouling. Source: L. Patston, MPI (Ministry of Primary Industries)*

Antifouling paints are used on boat hulls to slow the growth of marine organisms. The paints most commonly work in one of three ways: (1) slowly releasing a toxic chemical (biocide) from the hull coating; (2) slowly releasing the paint surface like a bar of soap over time (ablative coating); or (3) presenting a hard or slippery surface that makes it difficult for organisms to attach. Each type of paint has its own cleaning restrictions and requirements.

The main objective of implementing hull-cleaning best management practices (BMPs) is to eliminate pollution generated during cleaning operations. The best way to accomplish this goal is to use the least abrasive cleaning method possible when performing in-water cleaning operations.

- 1.** Paints are more toxic when new. Wait 60 to 90 days after applying fresh hull paint before having the hull cleaned.
- 2.** For boat hulls painted with sloughing or ablative paints, only clean running gear and zinc anodes. Cleaning the hull will release toxicant and paint to the water.
- 3.** Use only soft sponges or pieces of “carpet” to clean marine growth.
- 4.** Only use stainless steel pads or brushes on unpainted metal areas, never on bottom paint.
- 5.** Only use more rigorous cleaning pads as needed to remove hard marine growth.
- 6.** Bring zinc anodes back to shore for recycling or proper disposal.
- 7.** Do not create a visible plume or cloud of paint during hull cleaning.
- 8.** Conduct regular cleaning at an interval that prevents hard growth from forming.
- 9.** Do not sand or strip paint in the water.
- 10.** Conduct regular hull inspections, but only clean the hull when the extent of fouling growth requires cleaning.

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## Goals of BMPs

1. Prevent paints from creating a discharge plume and entering the water and sediments.
2. Keep paint intact on the hull and remove fouling growth to reduce drag and improve vessel performance, thereby reducing fuel consumption and emissions-related pollution.
3. Keep the boat owners informed of the changes in their hull paint performance. Regular hull cleaning performed properly will extend the life of most hull paints.

## What can you do?

**Use a BMP-certified diver.** If underwater hull cleaning is required, use a BMP-certified diver that follows the CPDA hull cleaning BMPs.

**Know your paint.** Things to consider before cleaning include: what kind of hull paint is being cleaned, how old is the paint, when was the last cleaning and what is the fouling rate in the region.

**Report any problems.** Report observations of paint plumes to the dock master.

## More information:

### BMP HANDBOOK

The California Professional Divers Association developed a handbook of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for boat hull cleaning in response to water quality concerns. Research by the University of California Cooperative Extension concluded that the BMPs used by the Association, including using a schedule of frequent cleanings with the softest tool possible, are effective at cleaning boat hulls with minimal release of copper and other marine biocides to the environment.

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### Sea Grant California

<https://caseagrant.ucsd.edu/>

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### University of California Cooperative Extension

<http://ucanr.edu>

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### Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

[www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles)

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