

MARPOL Annex V:

Leisure Marine Industry Guidance



MARPOL Annex V regulates the discharge of garbage into the sea and requires that cleaning agents and additives discharged into the sea via deck and external washwater must be non-harmful to the marine environment (Non-HME)

Compiled by Peter Wallbank - in line with the requirements of MARPOL Annex V and the 2017 Guidelines for the Implementation of MARPOL Annex V (resolution MEPC.295(71)) as they relate to cleaning agents or additives contained in deck and external surfaces wash water."

CLEANING YOUR BOAT

Chemicals and detergents that enter the water through washdown or run-off can have a significant impact on marine ecosystems.

MARPOL Annex V Regulations for *The Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships* makes it a legal requirement that any cleaning agents or additives discharged into the sea must be non-harmful to the marine environment (Non-HME).

Industry Best practice:

- Use only products evidenced by the manufacturer as non-harmful to the marine environment (Non-HME) where likely to be washed into the sea.
- Aim to conduct washdowns in areas where wastewater can be contained or filtered.
- Check with marinas or authorities for any additional local or regional restrictions that may also apply.

By following these simple steps, boat owners and operators can help protect marine life, water quality and coastal habitats - ensuring that cleaning practices support both good seamanship and environmental stewardship.

MARINAS, HARBOURS AND PORTS

Marinas, Harbours and Ports play a key role in reducing the release of harmful substances into the marine environment. Everyday activities such as washing of decks and top sides can introduce chemicals into the water if not carefully managed. Operators have a responsibility to promote and where possible, implement practices that ensure MARPOL compliance within their facilities.

Industry Best practice:

- Promote the use of products that are non-harmful to the marine environment (Non-HME) among berth holders and staff.
- Verify that tradespeople and service providers working on site are using products that meet MARPOL Annex V criteria.
- Provide clear information and signage to boaters highlighting environmentally responsible cleaning practices.
- Work with local authorities and environmental agencies to promote any additional local and regional regulations.

By taking these steps Marinas, Harbours and Ports can help ensure that their sites set a positive example of environmental responsibility - protecting water quality and marine ecosystems.

SUPPLIERS

Suppliers, chandlers and distributors are central to ensuring that customers understand their obligations under MARPOL Annex V. Customers should be made aware that products likely to enter the sea during use should be non-harmful to the marine environment (Non-HME)

Industry Best practice:

- Evidence should be provided by the producer of the cleaning agent or additive that the product meets the criteria for not being harmful to the marine environment. To provide an assurance of compliance a dated and signed statement to this effect from the product supplier would be adequate. This might form part of a Safety Data Sheet or be a stand-alone document.
- Provide clear product information and signage that identifies Non-HME-compliant products so that consumers have all the necessary information
- Educate staff so they understand MARPOL Annex V obligations and can confidently advise customers on compliant product choices.
- Support industry awareness by highlighting the importance of MARPOL compliance in marketing materials and point-of-sale displays.

By prioritising the supply and promotion of Non-HME, MARPOL Compliant products, equipment suppliers, chandlers, and distributors can help raise environmental standards across the sector - ensuring that the products reaching boaters contribute to a cleaner, safer and more sustainable marine environment.



MARPOL is a core part of sustainable marine operations and global environmental protection - Non-compliance with the MARPOL Convention may result in harsh penalties

LINKS

- Simplified overview of discharge provisions
- Guidelines for implementation of MARPOL Annex V
- Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships