

Regulation of marine toilet installations in Ontario

One of the possible concerns about rental boat activity on our waters is their potential to be a source of pollution. Groups chartering a boat for the day or weekend to travel on our waterways have the same needs for bathroom breaks as the rest of us. When the charter boat comes with toilet facilities, what regulations are there in Ontario to prevent the contents of those toilets being discharged into our waters? At the last CWA board meeting I agreed to summarize these for the association website.

The Marine Transportation website of Transport Canada includes this set of provisions for Ontario:

- Portable toilets are prohibited in Ontario waters.
- All craft fitted with a toilet must also be fitted with a holding tank.
- If the holding tank is fitted with a piping system that allows discharge of sewage directly overboard, then this discharge must be visibly disconnected.
- Sewage may only be discharged at shore pump-out facilities.

More proactively, the regulations specify that

- toilets and holding tanks must be installed so that the tanks get ALL toilet waste from the toilet,
- the installation must include a deck fitting and piping to allow a pump-out of the holding tank with shore-based equipment, and
- NO other means of disposal of the tank contents is to be provided.

One can still fear some personal waste getting into our waters, but these regulations make that difficult once the waste has gone into a marine toilet.

Norman Cameron, Past President