NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Dec. 20, 2012

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Chelan marinas get grants to upgrade boat sewage equipment

Two marinas on Lake Chelan have been awarded more than $30,000 in federal and state grants to replace ageing boat sewage pumpout facilities, making it easier for area boaters to safely dispose of untreated sewage.

The grants, funded by the federal Clean Vessel Act (CVA) and administered by Washington State Parks Boating Program, cover the full cost of the new pumpout equipment and will also reimburse the marinas for 75 percent of operation and maintenance expenses. Local marinas receiving the grants include the City of Chelan’s Lakeshore Marina and the Mason Bay Marina.

“I think it’s a great program,” said Charles Sablan, director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Chelan. By giving boaters the opportunity to pump rather than dump raw sewage, “You’re protecting something you depend on for business—the cleanliness of the water that draws people to swim, boat and fish.”

With 271,000 registered boats in Washington, and thousands more unregistered small craft, discharge of untreated human waste from boats can have serious health and environmental impacts. Untreated sewage in recreational waters can make swimmers ill and lead to beach closures. As organic matter from boat sewage breaks down, it can rob water of oxygen, harming fish and other aquatic wildlife.

Easy access to reliable boat sewage pumpout stations helps Washington boaters protect the state’s waters—and comply with U.S. law, which prohibits the discharge of raw sewage in inland waters or within three miles of the coastline. By using CVA pumpout facilities, boaters prevented more than 4 million gallons of sewage from contaminating Washington’s waters in 2011 alone.
Many marina owners, especially in eastern Washington, have not taken advantage of CVA grants, which have been available since 1992. Washington Sea Grant, in collaboration with Washington State Parks Boating Program, has been conducting outreach to marina owners to encourage them to apply for the grants.

“Not only do the grants cover 75 percent of equipment and installation,” said Alan Wolslegel, Clean Vessel Program Manager for Washington State Parks, “they reimburse 75 percent of parts, labor and other expenses to operate and maintain the pumpouts over the life of the equipment.” Funding for the CVA grants comes from a tax on recreational fishing gear and boat fuel.

When additional state matching funds are available, Washington State Parks is able to cover the remaining 25 percent of equipment costs, as it did for the Lake Chelan marinas. Grants are made year-round and are available for both new pumpout facilities and renovations to existing ones.

Including the Chelan facilities, more than 20 marinas across the state are expected to receive nearly $800,000 in Clean Vessel Act grants in 2012. There are currently about 150 pumpout stations in Washington. A searchable list of pumpout locations in Washington can be found at [www.parks.wa.gov/boating/pumpout/](http://www.parks.wa.gov/boating/pumpout/).

Based at the University of Washington, Washington Sea Grant provides statewide marine research, outreach, and education services. The National Sea Grant College Program is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. [http://www.wsg.washington.edu/](http://www.wsg.washington.edu/)