

NEWS RELEASE

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Clean boating comes to Pasco with new pumpout service at the Columbia Marine Center

Washington State Parks-funded pumpout station marks a key stage in the renaissance of Pasco's waterfront.

Boating just got cleaner and easier for the growing fleet of fishermen, duck hunters, and pleasure boaters plying the Columbia, Snake and Yakima Rivers in Eastern Washington. The Columbia Marine Center, next to Slagel Park in the Pasco Boat Basin, has installed its first-ever pumpout station to remove sewage from onboard holding tanks for proper treatment and disposal.

The new system is a boon for customers and other boaters, Columbia Marine Center proprietor Jim Toroni explained. "Before, they had to run way up-river to do any kind of pumping. At least, that's what I *hope* they were doing." Free, convenient pumpout service makes it easy for boaters to follow state and federal law, which forbids dumping raw sewage in nearshore waters where it can infect humans and aquatic organisms with norovirus and other pathogens, and promote algal growth and stagnant "dead zones."

The new pumpout station, built and operated with funding from Washington State Parks' Clean Vessel Act Program, is also a key step in the ongoing improvement of the Columbia Marine Center and the rest of Pasco's waterfront. Rick Terway, the City of Pasco's administrative and community services director, played a central role in pulling the project together.

The Columbia marina, which Toroni took over a year-and-a-half ago, has also added new docks with larger (32-foot) slips. "The boats just keep getting bigger," said Toroni. And that means more need for pumpout facilities.

Washington State Parks, in partnership with Washington Sea Grant, is working to meet that need throughout the state. The Clean Vessel Act Program helps marina owners install and operate pumpout stations, informs them and educates boaters about the importance of proper sewage disposal.

All this is funded by federal taxes on marine fuel, recreational boats, and fishing gear. Washington Sea Grant also distributes free adapter kits for cleaner, easier hands-free pumping. And it has used funds from the State Parks Clean Vessel Program to create a Google map showing all 146 CVA pumpoutsites statewide, at www.pumpoutwashington.org. Yacht clubs and other organizations that would like free pumpout adapters for their members should contact Aaron Barnett at (206) 616-8929 or aaronb5@uw.edu.

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. www.wsg.washington.edu