

# THE 2023

## CALIFORNIA BOATER KIT RECIPIENT QUESTIONNAIRE REPORT

### PRESENTED BY

California State Parks and California Coastal  
Commission's Boating Clean and Green  
Program, and The Bay Foundation

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the California State Parks Clean Vessel Education Program  
and the Federal Clean Vessel Grant Act Program



# The 2023 California Boater Kit Questionnaire Data Summary

## Introduction

The California Boating Clean and Green Program (BCGP)<sup>1</sup> and The Bay Foundation (TBF)<sup>2</sup> have been collaborating since 2001 to implement several programs including the California Dockwalker Program. Dockwalkers are partners who inspire and educate boaters and other recreators about safe and environmentally sound boating practices. Dockwalkers distribute California Boater Kits (Kit/Kits), which include educational materials and pollution prevention materials, while visiting marinas, boat launch ramps, boat shows, and events. Partners work together with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, Save Our Shores, Lake Berryessa Partnership, Conservation Corps chapters and many more organizations.

The [California Boater Kit](#) is the main outreach tool for Dockwalkers and Partners. The Kit targets best management pollution prevention practices related to the following pollutants: oil, sewage, marine debris, household hazardous waste, and toxic wastewater. The Kit highlights local environmental services such as sewage pumpouts, used oil and oil filter recycling facilities, and County household hazardous waste collection centers. Materials found in the Kit include both publications and resources, such as oil absorbents, fuel bib, “ABCs of California Boating,” “Environmental Boating Laws Every Recreational Boater Should Know,” “A Boater’s Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water” Binder Card, region-specific tide books, maps with clean boating resources, and/or additional region-specific educational literature.

The Kit and its components are specifically designed to prompt boaters to take action and implement at least one of the Program’s recommended best management practices. Boaters receive a Kit after completing a brief Boater Kit Questionnaire (Questionnaire) which also includes a pledge. This Questionnaire helps to identify gaps in environmental knowledge and better target future education efforts. In addition, the Questionnaire helps us to identify and [map](#) where boaters reside who have been engaged by Dockwalkers.

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<sup>1</sup> BCGP is a statewide program whose main objectives are to educate boaters about clean and safe boating practices and to provide technical assistance to marinas and local governments to increase the availability of environmental services for boaters. The program is jointly implemented by the California State Parks and the California Coastal Commission. The program was established in 1997 and it has four components: 1) Research, 2) Networking, 3) Technical Assistance, and 4) Education and Outreach. The program uses a multifaceted outreach approach to fulfill its objectives.

<sup>2</sup> TBF is a non-profit environmental organization founded in 1990 to improve water quality, conserve and rehabilitate natural resources, and to protect Santa Monica Bay’s benefits and values. TBF works with a range of stakeholders, including government agencies, environmental groups, local communities, industry, and scientists to create and put into action innovative policies and projects that conserve natural habitats both on land and underwater. TBF’s Boater Education Program was initiated in 1996 and is dedicated to the reduction of ocean pollution generated by boating activities.

Every year Dockwalkers and Partners distribute approximately 5,000 Kits throughout the state. Since 2000, Dockwalkers and Partners have distributed over 130,000 Boater Kits.

**2023 Boater Kit Questionnaire**

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions below. Your input helps improve the quality of environmental education in California.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location where you received the boater kit and questionnaire: \_\_\_\_\_ (event name & city)

1. How long have you been boating?  
\_\_\_\_\_ year(s) or \_\_\_\_\_ month(s)
2. What is your 5-digit home zip code?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What type of toilet is on your boat?  
 Installed toilet     Composting toilet  
 Port-a-potty         No toilet on board
4. Facilities with this symbol can?  
 Dispose of blackwater  
 Accept used oil for recycling  
 Use recycled water for irrigation  
 Don't know
5. What pollutant can you properly dispose of where you see this symbol?  
 Oily bilge water  
 Sewage  
 Trash  
 Don't know




Please see reverse →

6. How do you clean oil that has leaked into the bilge or engine compartment? **(Mark all that apply)**  
 Use rags/paper towels     Use oil absorbents  
 Use bilge cleaning products     I don't clean it  
 Use a bilge pumpout found at a marina  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
7. It is **illegal** to dump **treated boat sewage** in which of the following locations? For example: Electro Scan, Macerator **(Mark all that apply)**  
 Freshwater lakes, reservoirs or impoundments  
 Rivers that don't support interstate traffic  
 Marinas or yacht harbors  
 No Discharge Zones  
 All of the above  
 None of the above  
 Don't know
8. Which of the following may happen to those who discharge untreated boat sewage within the 3-mile territorial limit?  
 Nothing - It is discouraged, not against the law  
 Fine up to \$1000     Up to 6 months in jail  
 Fine up to \$2000     Don't know

9. Any discharge of oil or petroleum products into state waters should...  
 Be reported only to the marina  
 Be reported to both the National Response Center & CA Office of Emergency Services  
 Not be reported, but make sure it is prevented in the future  
 Don't know

**Pledge to Keep Our Waters Clean.**

Use cleaning products that are less toxic, biodegradable and phosphate free.

Ditch the disposables for reusables.

Use resources like the free Pumpout Nav app to know where to properly dispose of sewage.

YES! I would like to receive clean boating information in the future and a link for the California Boater Kit feedback survey and enter for the chance to receive a life jacket. A total of two life jacket winners will be randomly selected and notified in November 2022.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR PRIVACY IS IMPORTANT! The CA Coastal Commission, the CA State Parks, The Bay Foundation, and our partners do not share information with any other company or organization.

Place stamp here

FOLD

Vivian Matuk  
Commissioner / CA State Parks  
465 Market Street, Suite 300  
San Francisco, CA 94105



2023 Boater Kit Questionnaire front and back

## Methodology

In 2023, Partners and Dockwalkers distributed Kits and administered the Questionnaire using different outreach strategies. Partners focused on online education, participation in boating events, boat shows, and conducting clean boating presentations. Additionally, Dockwalkers distributed Kits and conducted education in-person using safety guidelines recommended by Partners. As a result of 2023's outreach throughout the boating season, 7,600 Kits were distributed, and 3,735 Questionnaires were collected.

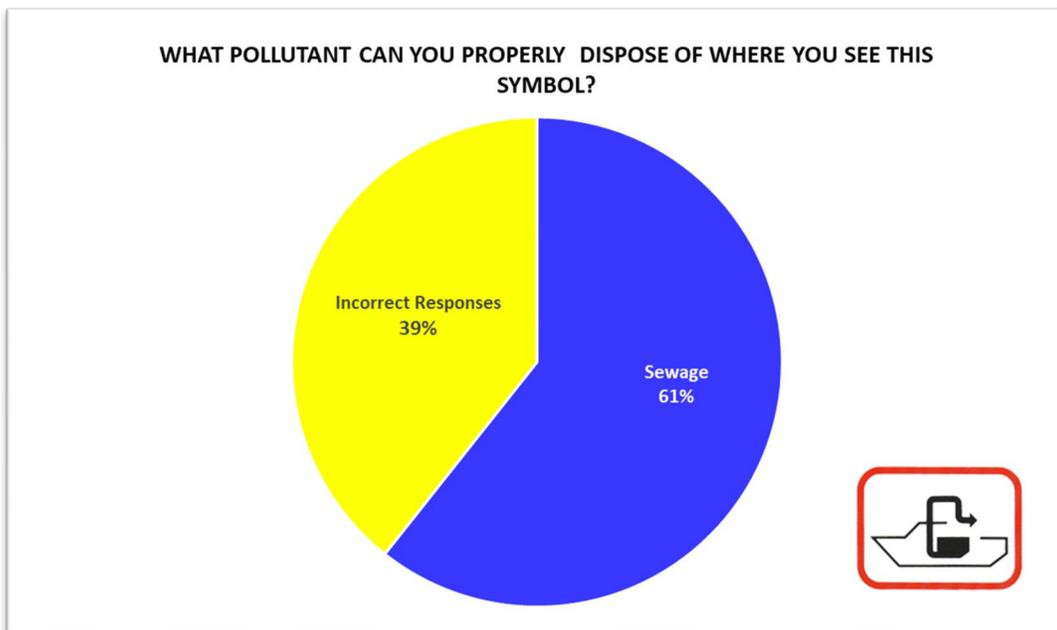
## Results

Below are the 2023 Boater Kit Questionnaire responses.

## Symbol Recognition

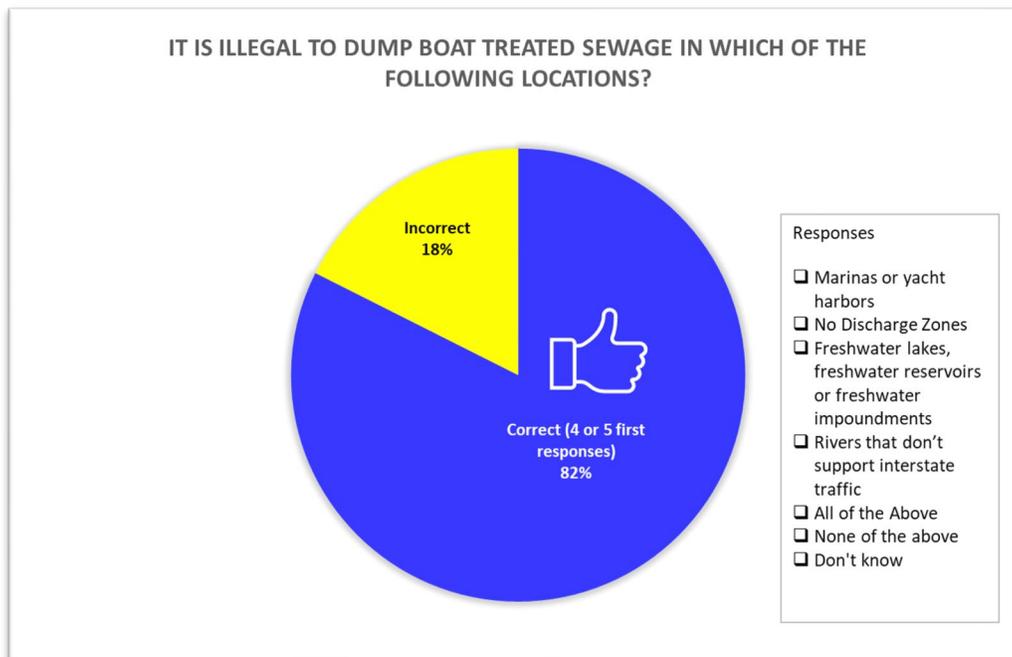


**Correct response: Accept used oil for recycling.** This logo represents centers (land-based or marinas) certified by the State that collect used oil for proper recycling. When you take your used oil to a certified center for recycling (identified with this logo), you are protecting the environment, conserving a valuable resource, and getting paid for it (40 cents a gallon). That is a winning combination! Find the nearest certified used oil collection center by clicking [here](#).

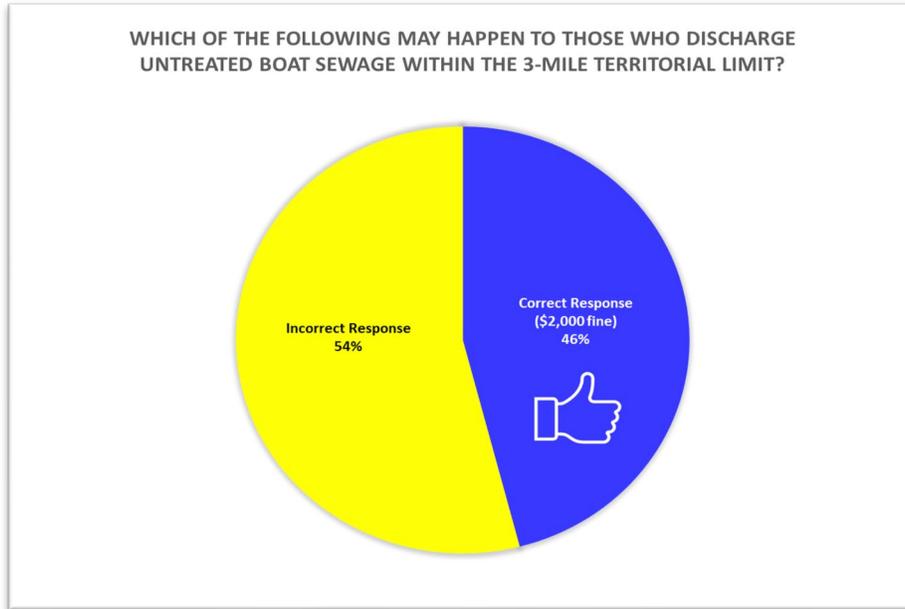


**Correct Response: Sewage.** Recreational boaters can look for this universal sewage pumpout symbol, which identifies boating facilities that offer pumpout stations. Reference this list of sewage pumpouts open to the public by visiting: [California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways' website](#) or by downloading the new [FREE Pumpout Nav app](#). Many of these sewage pumpouts have been funded by the California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways Clean Vessel Act Pumpout Grants.

## Boat Sewage Management and Environmental Boating Laws

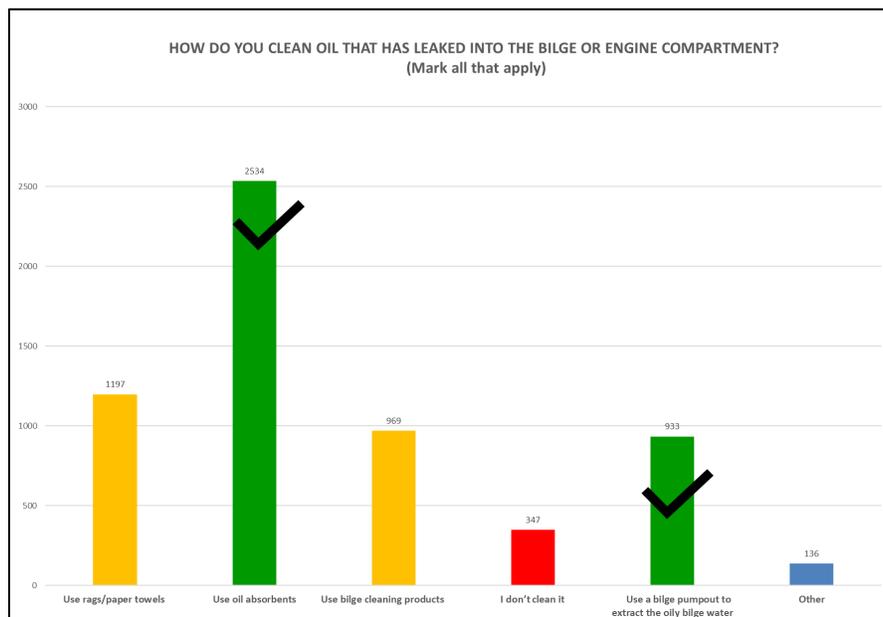


**Correct responses: All first 4 options or option 5.** It is illegal to dump treated boat waste in marinas, yacht harbors, freshwater lakes, reservoirs and rivers and No Discharge Zones. For more information, read the [Environmental Boating Laws brochure](#) (Sewage Section).

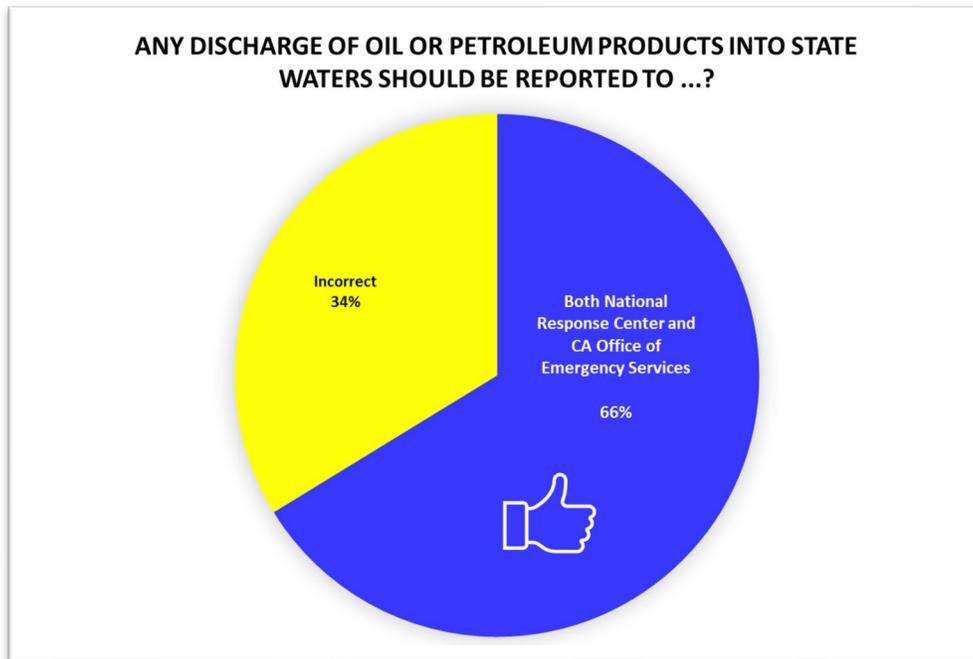


**Correct Response: Fine up to \$2,000.** It is against federal and state law to discharge untreated sewage anywhere within the three-mile territorial limit (including lakes, rivers, reservoirs or coastal water within three miles offshore). “Fines of up to \$2,000 can be imposed for illegal discharges” (CWA 312). Dumping raw sewage into our waterways is unnecessary, unhealthy, and hazardous. Visit a restroom, use the boat’s properly installed and U.S. Coast Guard approved marine sanitation device or a port-a-potty to hold or treat your waste and pumpout your boat sewage before you leave the dock. For more information see the [Environmental Boating Laws brochure](#) (Sewage Section).

## Oil Pollution Prevention Management and Reporting



The best recommended practices are to **use oil absorbents or a bilge pumpout at a marina**. Rags/paper towels are not design for cleaning oil that has leaked into the bilge or engine compartment, they can create a messy situation when removing it from the bilge because they can fall apart. If you use bilge cleaning products make sure you contain them. Do not add detergents or bilge cleaning products to bilge water before pumping it out over the side into the waters. Also, never use soaps or detergents to clean oil or fuel on the water! It is **ILLEGAL** and bad for the environment. Absorbents that are exposed to soaps or detergents are usually rendered ineffective. For more information visit [here](#).



**Correct Response: Both Phone numbers.** For more information see the [Environmental Boating Laws brochure](#) (Fuel and Oil Section).

### Want to help us increase clean and safe boating practices in California?

Become a Partner Dockwalker and get trained for free to become an environmental educator in California. Receive free educational materials to distribute to boaters at marinas, boat launch ramps, boat shows, and special events. Dockwalkers' efforts increase boater awareness about clean and safe boating, thus improving the recreation experience in California while helping to preserve its precious wildlife habitat and water quality.

Anyone from 15 to 100 years young interested in water quality and sharing clean boating information (regardless of your background) can become a Dockwalker! Our 2024 free training classes are listed [here](#).