



## Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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## DEM ANNOUNCES GRANTS UP TO \$75,000 ARE AVAILABLE TO IMPROVE BOAT PUMP-OUT FACILITIES TO KEEP COASTAL WATERS CLEAN

PROVIDENCE, RI –The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) today announced that up to \$75,000 in grant funds are available to communities and private businesses that own and/or operate boating facilities that help boaters with properly disposing of sewage. The grants, funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service Clean Vessel Act (CVA), help municipalities, marinas, and yacht clubs pay for improvements to marine and land-based pump-out facilities. Every year, DEM applies for federal funds to buy or replace CVA equipment for use by these entities to offer free pump-outs. Since 1994, DEM has awarded over \$2.5 million in CVA grants.

“Most of us know it’s not right to discharge wastewater directly from our boats into Narragansett Bay or the ocean. In fact, it’s illegal to pump waste within three nautical miles of the Rhode Island coast,” said DEM Director Terry Gray. “DEM works with municipal and marine trades partners to prevent the discharge of boat sewage, which impairs water quality by introducing bacteria and other pathogens and chemicals that are harmful to humans and marine life. The support of the US Fish and Wildlife Service Clean Vessel Act helps accomplish this by subsidizing pump-out facilities that empower thousands of Rhode Island recreational boaters to do their part to keep the bay and coastal waters clean.”

Boat sewage can threaten water quality by introducing bacteria and other pathogens, excess nutrients, and chemicals that are harmful to humans and marine life. In 1998, Rhode Island became the first state in the nation to receive a statewide “no discharge” designation from the US Environmental Protection Agency that prohibits boaters from discharging sewage into local waterways.

Marinas, yacht clubs, and municipalities are eligible to apply for funding. Projects to construct, replace, retrofit,



or maintain pump-out facilities will be considered. All grant awards are subject to a 25% grantee (partner) dollar match requirement. DEM will offer a maximum grant award of \$22,500 for eligible project costs of new and replacement land-based facilities, and a maximum grant award of \$75,000 for eligible project costs of new and replacement mobile pump-out boats.

Operators of mobile pump-out vessels can also apply for a maximum grant award of \$7,500 for eligible Operation and Maintenance (OM) costs. OM costs eligible for reimbursement include:

- hull painting
- engine, pump, and trailer maintenance
- insurance of pump-out vessels
- fuel and oil
- winterization and storage
- launching and hauling
- boat safety equipment
- personal protective equipment.

DEM also offers a maximum grant award of \$2,250 to operators of land-based pump-out stations for eligible OM costs. OM costs are eligible for reimbursement include periodic maintenance, winterization, spring commissioning, replacement parts, and repair of sewer connections. To receive grant funding for operations and maintenance of land-based station pump-out facilities, the operator of the facility agrees not to charge the boater any fees for pump-out service.

This year, all applications must be submitted via the state Grant Management System, located [here](#). Applications will be accepted for the 2023 season from Nov. 30 through Dec. 30. For more information, please visit [our website](#) or contact Steven Engborg at (401)-222-4700 x2777259 or by email at [steven.engborg@dem.ri.gov](mailto:steven.engborg@dem.ri.gov).

There are currently 15 pump-out boats and 59 facilities located across Narragansett Bay and coastal waters. All pump-out facilities must be kept fully operational to adequately meet the demand. Some 40,000 boats are registered in Rhode Island, and the state welcomes many thousands more visiting boats each year. Last year, a total volume of over 600,000 gallons of sewage was pumped out at these locations and diverted from directly entering Rhode Island's surface waters. Visit DEM's website for a [map](#) of marine pump-out facilities in Rhode Island.

DEM has partnered with the San Francisco Estuary Partnership to upload all publicly accessible pump-out facility data to the *Pumpout Nav* Application, available on [Android Play](#) and [iOS Apple](#) stores. This free phone application allows boaters to locate and get directions to the nearest pump-out station, view cost information and hours of operation, and gives them the ability to report any problems encountered while using the pump-out facility.

For more information on DEM programs and initiatives, visit [www.dem.ri.gov](http://www.dem.ri.gov). Follow [DEM on Facebook](#), Twitter (@RhodeIslandDEM), or Instagram (@rhodeisland.dem) for timely updates.

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