



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

235 Promenade Street | Providence, RI 02908 | 401.222.4700 | www.dem.ri.gov | @RhodeIslandDEM

CONTACT: Mike Healey, 401-258-0787
Michael.Healey@dem.ri.gov

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DEM AWARDS MORE THAN \$100,000 TO EIGHT COMMUNITY BOAT PUMPOUT FACILITIES TO KEEP COASTAL WATERS CLEAN

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Department of Environmental Management (DEM) today announces the award of \$104,769 in matching grants to eight communities and marinas to help expand and maintain boat pumpout facilities and keep coastal waters across Rhode Island clean.

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 pumpout facilities. DEM applies for federal funds to buy or replace CVA equipment for use by these entities to offer free pumpouts. Since 1994, DEM has awarded over \$2.5 million in CVA grants.



One of five mobile pumpout boats on Block Island.

“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 pumpout 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.

The 2023 grant recipients include:

- Barrington Yacht Club: \$1,943 for the maintenance of a stationary pumpout on the Barrington River
- Providence Marina: \$1,100 for the maintenance of a stationary pumpout on the Providence River
- Safe Harbor Cove Haven Marina (East Providence): \$37,420 for the replacement of an existing stationary pumpout on Bullock Cove
- Safe Harbor Greenwich Bay Marina: \$5,925 for the maintenance of existing stationary and mobile pumpouts on Greenwich Bay
- Safe Harbor Wickford Cove Marina: \$1,017 for operating costs of an existing stationary pumpout on Wickford Cove
- Town of Jamestown: \$27,000 for the construction of a new stationary pumpout and the maintenance of two existing stationary pumpouts in Jamestown
- Town of New Shoreham: \$7,500 for maintenance of three existing mobile pumpout boats in Great Salt Pond
- Westerly Yacht Club: \$22,864 for the replacement of an existing stationary pumpout on the Pawcatuck River

There are currently 15 pumpout boats and 59 facilities located across Narragansett Bay and coastal waters. Many existing facilities require repair and upgrades as they have exceeded their useful life expectancy since initial construction. All pumpout facilities must be kept fully operational to adequately meet demand and help prevent sewage discharges into RI waters. (Here is a [map](#) of marine pumpout facilities.) The grants require a 25% funding match and funded facilities must be available to all boaters. In addition, grant recipients agree to charge no more than \$5 per 30 gallons of sewage pumped.

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 facilities and diverted from directly entering Rhode Island's coastal waters.

Along with fishing and many other commercial and recreational interests, Rhode Island shellfish harvesters benefit from CVA pumpout grants. For more information on RI shellfish harvesting, [click here](#) or email here DEM.Shellfish@dem.ri.gov. For more information on DEM programs and initiatives, visit www.dem.ri.gov. Follow [DEM on Facebook](#), Twitter (@RhodeIslandDEM), or Instagram (@rhodeisland.dem) for timely updates.

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