

# PROTECT FLORIDA'S WATERS

## Funding available to ensure proper disposal of waste from recreational boats

The refreshing waters of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean, plus pristine lakes, rivers and streams are among some of Florida's priceless treasures. But improper disposal of boater sewage can seriously impact our waters.

Enjoying Florida's waters comes with the responsibility to protect it. Thanks to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Florida Inland Navigation District, there's an affordable and easy way to protect Florida's waters.

Marina managers can apply for a Clean Vessel Act (CVA) grant to support the purchase, installation, repair and maintenance of stationary pumpout equipment, portable pumpout equipment, pumpout boats and dump stations. The CVA's goal is to reduce sewage discharge that may substantially degrade local water quality. Grants are also available for the repair and the maintenance of pumpout equipment and for educational, outreach and public awareness programs.

Mark Waltman, manager of North Light Yacht Club in Okaloosa County, received about \$12,000 to purchase a stationary pumpout system.

"The application process wasn't difficult at all, and the staff there at DEP was very helpful," Waltman says. "I think it's outstanding that the state has stepped up to help provide a much-needed tool for the marina industry. It's an added benefit for customers, but also helps us protect the environment. Without our beautiful environment we don't have an industry."

DEP has awarded more than \$16 million in funds and has seen an increase from 135 pumpout stations to nearly 400 throughout the state. Based on funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, money for the CVA program ranges from \$1,500 to \$30,000 for stationary pumpouts and up to \$100,000 for pumpout vessels.

Monroe County applied for its first CVA grant in 2004 and received a



\$250,000 grant to provide for the collection and hauling of recreational vessel sewage in the Keys. This encouraged marinas, through contractual arrangements with the county, to install pumpout facilities and charge only \$5 per pumpout.

Only days after applying for funding in 2010, Monroe County received notification that it was to receive \$60,000 for operational costs of its pump-out vessel that serves the Key Largo area, says Rich

**Florida's waters are some of the state's most priceless assets. Funding from the Clean Vessel Act (CVA) program provides equipment needed to properly dispose waste and protect our waters.**

Jones, Senior Administrator of the Monroe County Marine Resources Office.

"CVA grants have been essential in the funding of pumpout operations in the Keys, which in turn has allowed boaters to comply with discharge regulations at a nominal cost," Jones says.

CVA pumpout facilities have received more than 12 million gallons of sewage to date.

Marina managers can apply online year-round for CVA funding. Facilities approved for funding are reimbursed 75 percent of the total cost of pumpout projects, only having to provide 25 percent of the total as match — a \$3 to \$1 return on their investment.

