

- **Recreational craft**
 - **Ban on the discharge of sewage from recreational craft**
- Ship traffic
- Swedish Register of Shipping
- Vessels

[ShippingRecreational craft](#)Ban on the discharge of sewage from recreational craft

Ban on the discharge of sewage from recreational craft

As from 1 April 2015, recreational craft being used within the territorial waters of Sweden, that is within 12 nautical miles of the coast, are banned from discharging sewage into the sea, lakes and internal waters. The ban applies to all recreational craft, except those listed for preservation, as well as to foreign recreational craft being used within the territorial waters of Sweden.

Sewage refers to any discharge of waste water and other waste from any type of toilet, including portable toilets.

A bucket, pot or similar does not count as a type of toilet and therefore falls outside the scope of the discharge ban. However, Swedish law contains regulations (in the Swedish Environmental Code's general rules of consideration) prescribing that anybody spending time out of doors shall take every possible precaution not to contaminate the environment. Discharging sewage into the water is not a precautionous behaviour, as the sewage contains the eutrophication nutrients phosphorus and nitrogen.

The main purpose of the discharge ban is to reduce the discharge of phosphorus and nitrogen into Swedish waters. Through UN conventions and EU regulations as well as agreements with the other countries surrounding the Baltic Sea, Sweden has agreed to reduce the discharge of phosphorus, nitrogen and other substances.

If your boat does not have a toilet onboard, you should still make sure that the sewage is taken care of on land and not discharged into the water. The urine is the component of the sewage which is most harmful when discharged into the water. This is because of the urine's high content of phosphorus, which gives nutriment to algae and other organisms. The urine produced by one human being in the course of 24 hours gives nutriment to one kilo of algae.

During peak season, the concentrations of nutrients and bacteria in the water in much frequented coves and harbours may reach high levels due to the discharge of sewage. Going for a swim and swallowing such water may cause health problems.

The discharge ban contains no requirements regarding the appearance of the toilet, and no technical requirements regarding the toilet or the tank. If, up to the present, you have discharged the sewage directly into the water and wish to continue to use the toilet within the territorial waters of Sweden, the toilet must be equipped with a tank that can be emptied on land. Alternatively, you may stop using the toilet and go ashore, or use a portable toilet, earth closet, incineration toilet or similar. It is not prohibited for a boat to have a toilet with direct discharge, as long as nothing is being discharged (this is unlike the case of Finland, for instance, where the toilet's direct discharge must be sealed).

The sewage can be taken care of in several ways. Stationary boat toilets may be emptied by suction, the sewage being sucked into one of the reception facilities found in the marinas.

Portable boat toilets may be carried ashore and emptied into a slop sink. If your boat does not have a toilet, you may visit a toilet on land or bury the waste in the ground. It is the responsibility of the marinas to make sure that there are reception facilities matching the need of the boat owners to dispose of their waste on land.

According to the information submitted to the Swedish Transport Agency, there are currently approximately 270 pump-out stations in Sweden.

[A map with Swedish text.](#)

There will be no active, separate supervision to check that recreational craft comply with the requirements, but persons caught in the act by the police or the coast guard may face an on-the-spot-fine for the discharge of sewage. Instead, the supervision will be directed towards the marinas, to make sure that they really are able to receive the waste that the boat owners need to dispose of.

It is not possible to apply for exemptions, neither from the discharge ban nor from the reception facility requirements for the marinas.