



ALASKA BOATERS TIP SHEET

Spill Proof Oil Changes

Protect Yourself and the Environment!

After oil has been used it contains increased levels of toxic materials that are harmful to you, your engine and the marine environment. Used motor oil is the most commonly spilled petroleum product in the US and it doesn't have to be. By taking a few basic precautions you can keep oil off you and out of the harbor and keep both healthy and happy.

Plan Ahead and Be Prepared!

After you remove oil from your boat you are in possession of a hazardous waste that must be disposed of properly. Most harbors in Alaska have disposal facilities available for used oil and saturated oil absorbents. Before removing oil from your boat, see the harbor staff for an orientation on proper disposal of your oil.

You should have a system in place for your own best practices on your boat. You should be able to change the oil without any drips or leaks on you or your vessel.

Use personal protective equipment that guards against exposing you to oil, such as disposable gloves and eye-protection.

Consider investing in a commercially available closed vacuum system that allows for removal of engine oil from the dip-stick tube directly into a container. Some of these sell for under \$100.00 and make oil changes and disposal simpler, quicker and almost fool-proof.

To reduce the need to change oil on the water, change your oil prior to launching your boat for the season. Whenever possible, pull your boat out of the water before changing the oil.

Some basic tips on oil changes:

- ◆ Prior to removing the oil, run the engine to heat the oil. This ensures contaminants aren't left in the pan and the oil flows easier.
- ◆ Have absorbent pads placed under the engine drain, the receptacle and transfer hoses to catch any spills.
- ◆ After the oil is out of the engine, and when removing the filter, loosen the filter, put a Zip Lock Baggie around it, and then remove by hand. Have an absorbent pad available to catch any drips and to clean around the filter area.
- ◆ Seal the bag and place upright and out of the way.
- ◆ Follow the manufacturer's recommendation as to reinstalling the filters.
- ◆ Check the dip stick to ensure the engine is empty of used oil. If using the oil plug for removal, check the pan to ensure you re-installed the plug or closed the valve prior to re-filling the crankcase with new oil.
- ◆ Wipe up any drips prior to transporting the oil and oil filter up the ramp to the disposal area.
- ◆ Start the engine and let it run a few minutes to check the oil pressure and to make sure there are no oil leaks around the filter or drain plugs.
- ◆ Dispose of the oil properly at your harbor disposal facility. Talk with the harbormaster for more information on disposal of rags, filters, and other hazardous materials.

Pat yourself on the back for a job well done. You protected your investment, your environment and your health.

