

## **Practice Green Boating**

Boating is associated with so many enjoyable outdoor activities: wildlife watching, swimming, fishing, snorkeling and diving. Each of these experiences is enhanced by the clean water needed for a healthy ocean.

Unfortunately, mishandling a boat can harm ecosystems, wildlife and water quality. Improper handling, irresponsible or neglectful vessel maintenance, and poor refueling, repair and storage habits all present environmental risks. Reducing these risks not only helps preserve clean water and protect the animals that live in it, but also keeps boaters and their families safe – and could even save you money.

As a boater, you are in a unique position to be a leader in water protection. Ocean Conservancy's Good Mate program provides five easy ways boaters can protect our ocean and waterways:

### **1. Be a leader in your community**

Talk about marine litter prevention with members of your boating community, from your neighbor in the next slip to boating clubs and marina managers.

### **2. Offer your time**

Volunteer in boat and marina cleanup programs, especially at sites only accessible by boat. And participate in Ocean Conservancy's annual International Coastal Cleanup, the largest volunteer effort of its kind for the ocean.

### **3. Accidents happen**

Be prepared with absorbent pads to clean oil or fuel spills. Dish soap doesn't work. It just causes those liquids to sink and contaminate the bottom.

### **4. Take it all back to shore**

Don't allow cigarette butts to go overboard; small but significant, they are the most prevalent marine litter item found during the International Coastal Cleanup. Dispose of them properly onshore.

### **5. Set the pace**

Recycle everything you can, from beverage containers to propeller-snarling fishing line or plastic bags.

For additional information on Ocean Conservancy's Good Mate program and to learn how you can incorporate green boating practices into your boating experience, visit [www.oceanconservancy.org/goodmate](http://www.oceanconservancy.org/goodmate).