



Top Tips for Preserving the Coast: A Beach-Goer's Guide

More than half the U.S. population lives along the coast and the average American spends 10 recreational days a year at the coast. With so many people at the coast, beaches can fall victim to the strain. You can reduce the impact you have on the beach by following these tips:

- 1** *Stay off beach dunes and grasses.* Beach dunes are the first line of defense against coastal storms and dune grass protects shoreline homes and businesses from erosion. When people walk, drive or bike over them, the dunes can collapse and leave the property behind them vulnerable.
- 2** *Watch for public access signs.* These signs, posted by your state's coastal program, indicate places — beaches, public piers, walkways, and parking lots — open to everyone.
- 3** *Don't drive on the beach.* Beaches are fragile! The sand, shells, grasses and animals that make up a beach can be crushed and destroyed under the weight of vehicles.
- 4** *Pick up after your dog.* Pet waste is a natural fertilizer that encourages marine plants to grow out of control, killing crabs and other fish and damaging the entire food chain. It means higher seafood prices and unemployment in coastal towns!
- 5** *Clean up the beach.* Pick up trash, even if it's not yours, and dispose of it in trash receptacles.
- 6** *Never throw cigarettes onto the ground or out the car window,* especially at the beach. Rainwater washes everything on the ground into rivers, bays and eventually to the beach. Cigarette filters don't break down and can cause harm to sea birds, and the entire food chain.
- 7** *Never leave fishing line* or hooks on the beach. Fishing line strangle marine animals. Hooks kill the fish that eat them and pose a threat to other people and animals walking on the beach.
- 8** *Cut loops* from six-pack yokes and other plastic items before disposing of them in trash receptacles. Marine animals swallow or become entangled in plastic and die, which threatens our entire food chain.
- 9** *Recycle the containers you use at the beach.* Recycling reduces waste and marine pollution.
- 10** *Participate in coastal cleanup campaigns.* If your city doesn't have one, start one! Call the Center for Marine Conservation's Marine Debris Information Office at (202) 429-5609 to learn how.

Pass the word on to other beach-goers.



A Boater's Bible: 10 Tips for Preserving the Coast

With thousands of people enjoying boating every year, recreational boaters can inadvertently contribute to the marine pollution problem, especially in back bays and rivers. You can reduce your boat's amount of pollution by following these tips:

- 1** Avoid using toxic TBT paints. Use the safer alternative antifouling paints available at your local marina or boating store.
- 2** Keep a garbage receptacle on board, keep it covered, and make sure everyone on board uses it. If you dispose of your garbage at a marina, follow their recycling rules. If your marina does not recycle, encourage them to start a recycling program.
- 3** *Never* discard fishing line overboard.
- 4** Avoid bringing disposable plastic products on board, especially plastic bags and six-pack rings. Not only are these products harmful to marine animals, but they also tangle boat props, clog intakes, and litter beaches.
- 5** *Never* throw cigarette butts overboard. Studies show that filters, which don't break down in the marine environment, are harmful to sea birds and the entire food chain.
- 6** Don't discharge human waste directly into the water. If you have an installed toilet, be sure to use the nearest decharge pump-out facility rather than discharging waste at sea. If you own a portable toilet, empty it in a restroom. If your boat doesn't have a toilet, buy one at a local marine retailer!
- 7** When filling your boat's gas tank, avoid spilling or overflowing gasoline into the water.
- 8** Make sure your motor doesn't leak gas or oil into the water. Don't drain engine fluids into the water.
- 9** Place a bilge "pillow" — an oil absorbing sponge available at marine stores — in your bilge to remove oil from your bilge water before discharge.
- 10** When cleaning your boat, use a *non-phosphate* detergent and a scrub brush.

Pass along these suggestions to other boaters!



As an Environmentally Responsible Diver...

I dive within the limits of my ability and training.

I am careful about what I touch underwater.

I do not break plants or coral or collect "souvenirs."

I respect environmental laws and game limits.

I collect and dispose of trash I find while diving.

**I let dive buddies, resorts, and dive operators know
how I feel about environmental responsibility.**

I never dive in a manner that would hurt the environment.

**I use mooring buoys whenever available or anchor
in areas free of live bottoms.**

I am considerate of ocean wildlife.

Text Courtesy of:

