

ALTERNATIVE FUEL—BIODIESEL AND SVO

When we're sailing and using the wind, we are harnessing the power of nature, literally, to move our boats. But sometimes we need to turn on our engines to get out of the marina, avoid a dangerous obstacle, or move against the wind. One way to reduce your carbon emissions is to fuel your boat with either biodiesel or Straight Vegetable Oil (SVO):

- **Biodiesel**—This usually is a mixture of both biodiesel and traditional diesel labeled 80/20 (80% diesel, 20% biodiesel), 50/50, 20/80 or as B20 (20% biodiesel), B50, B100, etc. Biodiesel can be added to any diesel engine without any modifications. Burning it contributes a net of zero carbon emissions to the atmosphere, as the carbon emitted is merely that which was consumed by the plant as it was grown.
- **Straight Vegetable Oil**—Instead of growing plants solely for fuel, SVO reuses the by-products of restaurants (fryer grease and others) and recycles it to power an engine. With a few simple conversions the Green Grease Monkeys (www.greengreasemonkey.com) can make sure your boat runs cleanly and easily on this alternative fuel. You can also do it yourself!
- **Low Sulfur Diesel**—in cases where both SVO and biodiesel are unavailable, you should fuel on the most energy efficient, low-sulfur diesel available.

OIL SPILLS AND BILGE SPONGES

If you're not fueling your boat with Straight Vegetable Oil, any fuel you spill is going to create a big problem. One single quart of oil when spilled can create an oil slick as large as three football fields of water surface. When oil is spilled, the sheen that it produces often remains on this surface layer, affecting fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife. Even the small amount of oil that can get pumped out from a boat with the bilge water can have a profound, harmful effect.

Keep a couple oil-absorbent pads on hand in case you spill and place a bilge sponge in your bilge to remove oil from the water, which can absorb up to a quart of oil or gas. It floats in the bilge and does not absorb water or interfere with pumps or other gear. Once hydrocarbons have been fully absorbed and encapsulated, some products, like the Smart Sponge Bilge Skimmer (www.abtechindustries.com), can be reused as an alternative fuel.

SEWAGE DISCHARGE AND NO DISCHARGE ZONES (NDZ)

It is so easy to flush our sewage overboard while we out cruising the seas, but discharge from a single boat over one weekend contributes the same amount of bacterial pollution as the treated sewage from 10,000 people. Untreated sewage contaminates shellfish beds and spreads disease to people (just imagine swimming through it... or eating it!). The chemicals used to treat onboard waste can seriously stress marine life and the bacteria that accompany sewage deprive other marine life of oxygen. Though the EPA has designated many aquatic areas as No-Discharge Zones, treat all our waters as an NDZ and pump-out properly. Pump-out stations are everywhere. Use these resources and do your part to insure many days of odor-free and healthy sailing.

RECYCLED TROPHIES

The best part of a regatta (after the actual racing, of course), is getting and giving out trophies. When choosing your trophies, make sure they are made of recycled or reclaimed wood, metal or glass. Most companies will offer this option. Another possibility is to enlist a local artist (perhaps a member of your club or organization) to design and create your regatta trophies out of recycled or reclaimed materials.

OTHER GREEN PRODUCTS AND RESOURCES

Visit www.cleanwaterfront.net for some more ideas and ways you can green your club or marina over the long term. This includes low-impact docks and other infrastructure.

Greenseal.org approves a wider array of products as sustainable and eco-friendly, much in the way Clean Regattas does.