

Alaska Cruise Ship Dumping Talking Points

History

- **2006:** The citizens of Alaska passed a citizen's initiative requiring large cruise ships to treat their waste water to the point where it would meet the water quality criteria designed to protect human and aquatic life. It was never fully implemented by Alaska.
- **2013:** The Cruise Ship Association successfully lobbied the state legislature to change the law giving cruise ships the right to dump waste water at concentrations many times the water quality criteria into "Mixing Zones" around the discharge port.
- **2014:** The Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation implemented the new law by authorizing a General Permit for all large cruise ships.
 - This General Permit allows the mixing zones to be 149 foot semi-circles around the end of the pipe where water quality for ammonia, chlorine, dissolved copper, nickel, and zinc can be many times the standard as long as it meets those standards beyond the edge.
 - For instance, ships are allowed to discharge copper (very toxic to salmon) 16 times the level acutely toxic to aquatic life.
 - The General Permit made no allowances for docks or anything that may block mixing within that area. SEACC fought this.

Present

- Ships applying to dump wastewater under the General Permit submit an analysis of their waste and the state decides whether or not to let them dump. Some are not allowed to dump in Alaska waters at all, most can dump while moving more than 6 knots anywhere and some can dump while tied up to the dock in port.
- Of the ships allowed to dump in port, the amount of waste water allowed to be dumped in Ketchikan while docked at port by cruise ships:
 - **Approximately 4,400,000 gallons per month of grey water** (treated water from showers, kitchens, washing, dry cleaning chemicals – which are a known carcinogen, and cleaning products)
 - **Over 1,000,000 gallons per month of black water** (treated water from toilets - sewer)
- Find a list of ships and where they are permitted to dump
 - Go to DEC's Cruise Ship Reports site: <http://dec.alaska.gov/water/cruise-ships/cruise-reports/>
 - Click on "2018 Cruise Ship Discharge Status" for the current list
 - Note: stationary = docked at port

Take Action

- **Alaska Water Quality Standards (18 AAC 70) require that surface waters and adjoining shorelines be free from floating oil, film, sheen or discoloration.**
 - **Report:** Any discharge you observe a discharge that has **floating oil, film, sheen or discoloration** it should be reported to: Ed White at 907-465-5138 or DEC.WQ.Cruise@alaska.gov. Be sure to note the date, time, dock location, and name of the vessel. Also describe what it looks like and smells like, edward.white@alaska.gov
- Alaska will have to re-new the General Permit (which lasts 5 years) starting next year and you can help make it more protective by becoming informed and working to change it.
 - **Contact** SEACC for more information (info@seacc.org).
- Ultimately, it is the law that needs to be changed to assure our waters and food sources are protected. Both California and Washington State have banned cruise ships from dumping in their waters. The waters we depend on in Alaska require at least as much protection.
 - **Contact** your State Representative and demand that health be placed over the profit of cruise ship companies.

More Information

- DEC's Cruise Ship Program: <http://dec.alaska.gov/water/cruise-ships/>