

## **Sample Script for Dockwalking** *(Face-to-Face Education and Distribution of Boater Kits)*

**Below you will find a sample script Dockwalkers can utilize when conducting face-to-face education and distributing Boater Kits.**

Dockwalking can happen at any location where you plan to conduct face-to-face education and distribute Boater Kits (Dockwalking). This includes:

- Launch ramps
- Fishing docks
- Fuel docks
- Marina docks
- Wash-down areas
- Boating and fishing events (Ex: opening days, boat parades, cruising events, fishing derbies and shows)
- Parks
- Marine supply stores, or
- On the water, among others

**We encourage you to use the following script as a guide. You probably won't cover all this information in one visit and that's okay! Use this resource for insight on educating and presenting the Boater Kit.**

**Suggested dialogue in italics below:**

Dockwalker: At a boating event, boating facility, or show:

a) *"Do you own a boat?"*

Or

Anywhere:

b) *"Do you own a boat? Would you like a free Boater Kit? It has tools that help prevent pollution and great information about safe and eco-friendly boating.."* Show the kit but do not give to boater yet.

Introduce yourself as a Dockwalker, a clean boating educator. You may want to use your Dockwalker training certificate, hat, or tag for identification.

Emphasize you are not selling anything or asking for any donations. You are an educator who wants to share some clean and safe boating information and a Boater Kit with boaters.

Note – an upbeat friendly voice and engaging eye contact helps in garnering interest.

Boater: a) *"Yeah, I have a boat."*

b) *"Sure"*

- c) *“No, I’d like to have a boat, but I’m just looking around” or “I used to have a boat, but I got rid of it.”*

Dockwalker: a) *“I am distributing these Boater Kits for free. If you’re interested, all you have to do is fill out this survey. It just takes about 3 minutes of your time.”*  
(Show the kit and the survey)

b) *“Great, just fill out this survey and I’ll be happy to give you a Boater Kit”*

- c) Respond by providing information about used oil recycling and household hazardous waste disposal – use tabletop materials (if applicable). If they become interested in talking about boats, continue educating, but don’t distribute kits to anyone who doesn’t own a boat.

Allow the boater time to fill out the survey once done collect the survey.

Dockwalker: *“Thank you, now I’m just going to tell you the answers to some of the questions and what’s in the kit.”*

**After you collect the questionnaire, provide the boater with the correct response for each question WITHOUT changing his/her response and start showing the materials inside the Boater Kits that backup your response including “Environmental Boating Laws Every Recreational Boater Should Know”. Keep sample items from the kit handy to show while talking.**

## **TOPIC #1 – PREVENTING OILY DISCHARGE, USING OIL ABSORBENTS, AND RECYCLING USED OIL AND OIL FILTERS**

Dockwalker: *“Does your boat have an inboard, or an outboard, or inboard/outboard engine?”*

Boater: a) *“It’s an inboard/outboard.”*

Then they can use the oil absorbents (pillow and sheet) in the bilge.

b) *“It’s an outboard engine.”*

All the following information stays the same, except the bilge is not such a distinct location. You can ask them if their boat has a bilge, if not, they can use the absorbents in the bottom of the boat.

- c) *“No, it’s a sailboat with no auxiliary motor... kayak, canoe, etc.”*  
Find out if they change their own oil on their car and refer to the oil and filter recycling and household hazardous waste materials from the kit found in the Binder Card. Also suggest they share items they may not need with a friend who can use them.

Dockwalker:

*“Can you guess what this is?”*

Show the oil absorbent pillow– Asking them to guess engages them in the conversation.

If they don’t know, they usually joke about it. Keep up the humor.

Boater: *“A neck pillow.”*

You can respond with a joke about what to use it for and then describe the real use.

Dockwalker: *“It’s an oil absorbent pillow. It’s designed to soak up oil in the bilge, but it does not absorb water. We call it an ‘oil-only’ absorbent, and it’s especially designed for marine use.”* (Hand it to them and let them feel it). *“This product is made of polypropylene to soak up oil but not water.”*

*“You place it under the engine, in the bilge to catch fuel spills at fuel filler fitting or air vent, while filling a portable tank, and to remove an oily sheen on the water. When using absorbent in the bilge, secure it to prevent clogging or fouling the bilge pump and the bilge pump float or sensor.”*

Show the loop and zip tie.

*In the market there are several options of absorbents including this pillow, the oil sheet that holds the Boater Kit content, or a sock/sausage for deep compartments.”*

You can also show them the oil absorbent sheet that holds the Boater Kit content (with no loop...)

*“Place this in the bilge of your boat and secure it so it doesn’t float around and potentially block the bilge pump (that would be dangerous because you need the pump to work if you start taking on a lot of water). The sheets are mainly used for shallow bilges.”*

Boater: *“I never get any oil in my bilge; it’s clean and dry as a whistle”*

Dockwalker: *“Great! You must really maintain your engine. That’s the first step in preventing any oily discharge. However, even the most meticulous boater is bound to have a leak sometime. I recommend that you always keep one of these in your bilge, just in case. Besides, if you have an automatic bilge pump, you may not notice the oily sheen before the pump kicks on and makes it disappear. In addition, if you or a fellow boater have a spill it is important to always have an absorbent handy. You can get a new absorbent using the West Marine coupon found in your Boater Kit.”*

\*Point out the West Marine coupon.

Boater: b) *“How much oil does that thing soak up? I had a problem last month when I was....”*

Dockwalker: b) *“It can soak up about a quart of oil.”*

Boater: *“Can I wash it out and reuse it?”*

Dockwalker: *“No, the absorbents can’t be washed out and reused. In fact, they don’t work after being exposed to soap. And soap should never be used to clean oil in an aquatic environment. Soaps emulsify oil, breaking it up into microscopic drops that disperse through the water column. You can’t see the oil sheen, and you can’t remove the oil anymore because it’s dispersed. But you will have added more pollutants (phosphates and detergents) to the environment. Applying soaps or cleaning products to remove fuel or oil sheen on the water is illegal. Use an ‘oil-only’ absorbent to remove the oil from the water or from your bilge. And if you have a real mess down there, use a steam cleaning service or bilge pump-out facility.”*

The maps and Tidebooks display the locations of California’s 11 bilge pumpouts.

Boater: *“What do I do with the pillow and the sheet when I want to discard it? How do I know when to change it?”*

Dockwalker: *“When the absorbents get fully saturated, you need to change them out. The used absorbent must be disposed of as hazardous waste because used oil is considered a hazardous waste and absorbents soaked with used oil are treated the same way in California. There are facilities in California that are actively collecting used absorbents and distributing new ones for free. To find these locations look at the maps in the back of this Tidebook. You can also ask your marina or fuel dock operator to properly dispose of the saturated absorbents, or go to your County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center, call 1(800) CLEANUP (253-2687), or visit <http://www.earth911.org/> for hazardous waste disposal locations near you.”*

If you receive a Northern California Boater Kit, please refer the boater to the Northern California Tidebook (pages 66-69), San Francisco Bay Area map and/or the Delta map for oil absorbent exchange centers.

If you receive a Southern California Boater Kit, please check the Southern California Tidebook (maps pages) and the ‘Southern California Boater’s Guide.’

Show the phone number and webpage on the absorbent wrapper or binder card.

## TOPIC #2 – SAFETY WARNING ABOUT HANDLING HAZARDOUS WASTES, AND FLAMMABLE MATERIALS

When discussing the use of oil absorbents on oil and fuel spills, the disposal of hazardous wastes, and conducting engine maintenance and repair, Dockwalkers should warn boaters to keep safety uppermost in mind. Dockwalkers are not expected to provide a comprehensive course in boat safety during the short educational visit. However, when discussing specific maintenance and repair issues with boaters, or discussing the handling of saturated absorbents and fuel spills, Dockwalkers should advise boaters about the safety concerns raised in implementing environmentally sound boating practices. Here's an example of how to follow any conversation about the use of oil absorbents.

Dockwalker: *“Remember that oil, gasoline, diesel, solvents and absorbent materials that are saturated with these products are flammable materials. So, I recommend that if you store these items on board, you do so in a safe manner, especially keeping them away from sources of ignition and properly ventilating the bilge compartment and other enclosed spaces. You can refer to the ‘ABC’s of Boating Law’ and the Binder Card in your Boater Kit for more information about safety precautions or check with the US Coast Guard. Also, remember to use gloves to protect yourself from physical contact when handling these materials.”*

*“If you see or cause a spill of oil or chemicals, by law you are required to report it to both (800) OILS911 and (800) 424-8802 and to your marina.”*

This information is found in the oil absorbent pillow wrapper, the Boater kit wrapper, the binder card, the Tidebooks, and the ABCs of Boating Law.

Dockwalker: *“Do you change the oil from your boat?”*

Boater: a) *“Yes.”*

b) *“NO, I hire a contractor to do it for me”*

Dockwalker: a) *“If you change your own oil, use a closed system -a portable vacuum oil change pump that drains into a closed container to prevent spills during transfer of oil to a recycling facility or used oil collection center (available at most marine supply stores). **Recycle your used oil and used oil filters** at a certified used oil collection center. Call 1-800-CLEANUP or visit [earth911.org](http://earth911.org) for recycling centers near you.”*

b) *“Please ask your contractor to always **recycle used oil and used oil filters** at a certified used oil collection center. Call 1-800-CLEANUP or visit [earth911.org](http://earth911.org) for recycling centers near you.”*

### TOPIC #3 - FUEL SPILL PREVENTION

Dockwalker: *"What about when you fuel your boat? Do you usually fuel on the water?"*

- Boater:
- a) *"Yes, but I'm pretty careful."*
  - b) *"Yes, I carry an extra portable tank and fill the engine when I'm out boating"*
  - c) *"No, I keep my boat on a trailer and fill at the gas station."*

- Dockwalker:
- a) *"Most boaters get some splash-backs or spillage at the fuel dock. Does that ever happen to you?"*
  - b) *"When you fill up on the water, it's really hard to prevent spills. Have you tried any fuel spill prevention techniques? Have you used or seen this fuel bib before?"*

Hand them the fuel bib from your Boater Kit.

- Boater:
- a) *"Yes, sometimes." Or "No, the attendant fills the tank for me."*
  - b) *"Well, I try not to spill."*

- Dockwalker:
- a) *"At the fuel dock, you can avoid fuel spills by fueling slowly and listening to or feeling the air vent. When the tank is nearly full, you'll hear or feel a gush or air. You can also purchase and install a fuel/air separator and some other type of fuel spill prevention device at the marine supply shop such as this fuel bib. Remember that fuel expands in the heat, so it's a good idea to leave at least 10% space in the tank to prevent fuel from spilling out the air vent when it's hot."*

*"This fuel bib can be re-used until fully saturated. Make sure once you use it to place it in a bag or close container and away from sources of ignition or the heat. Once it is fully saturated dispose of it as a hazardous waste. Go to your County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center for proper disposal."*

### TOPIC #4 - PLAN AHEAD! MANAGE BOAT SEWAGE WASTES PROPERLY

Dockwalker: *"Does your boat have an installed toilet or a port-a-potty?"*

- Boater:
- a) *"Yes, I have a toilet with a holding tank."*

- Dockwalker:
- a) *"That's the most environmentally sound system, as long as you only discharge sewage using a sewage pump-out or a dump station for the port-a-potty."*

- Boater:
- b) *"No, I don't have one."*

If they don't have one because they only have a ski boat or small outboard, sewage is not an issue you should spend time on. But if they don't have one because they just go overboard or use a can, or something like that, talk about what is recommended.


Dockwalker: b) *"We recommend that you use a system like a holding tank or port-a-potty, where the sewage gets pumped out to a municipal sewage treatment system, just like your toilet at home. You can use the West Marine coupon to help offset the costs of purchasing the components of an installed toilet or port-a-potty."*

Boater: c) *"I have a system that treats the sewage (chemical treatment). It's Coast Guard-approved."*

Dockwalker: c) *"Yes, those systems are Coast-Guard approved, but you may never discharge in a 'No Discharge Area.'"*

Currently, there are 11 No Discharge Zones in California, reference page 53 of the "ABCs of Boating Laws."

*"And remember, it is illegal to discharge **untreated sewage** anywhere within the three-mile territorial limit including lakes, rivers, reservoirs or coastal waters and in Marine Sanctuaries. **Never discharge treated boat sewage** (like the one you have) into a marina, swimming/wading areas, a sanctuary, poorly flushed areas, lakes, reservoirs, or freshwater impoundments and into a federal No Discharge Zones. It is discouraged in Marine Sanctuaries."*

*"The best way to protect the environment is to use a system like a holding tank or port-a-potty, where the sewage gets pumped out to a municipal sewage treatment system, just like your toilet at home. Marinas with this symbol  have sewage pumpout services. If you need parts to upgrade or maintain your installed toilet you have a West Marine coupon in the kit that can help offset the cost."*

If you receive the Northern California Boater Kit, please refer to the San Francisco Bay Area map and or the Delta map for sewage pumpout locations and the Tidebook (pages 66-69).

If you receive a Southern California Boater Kit, please refer to the Southern California Tidebook and the "Southern California Boater's Guide."



In addition, refer the boater to the new FREE Pumpout Nav App found on the back of the Tidebooks and on the inside of the Boater Kit wrapper. Pumpout Nav helps boaters find the nearest pumpout station to their location and boaters can report a problem with a unit directly through the app.



We rarely get beyond discussions of oil and sewage, but you should be prepared to discuss the following, because they often come up. Review your training notes and training folder for the following topics:

## TOPIC #5 - MARINE DEBRIS, WASTE REDUCTION, and RECYCLING

## TOPIC #6 - TOP & BOTTOMSIDE BOAT MAINTENANCE

Once you are done, say **“Thank you”** to the boater for his/her time!

### ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Keep it light, smile, and joke as much as possible.
- Never make boaters feel like boat pollution is a serious crime. Instead, portray the attitude that saving the planet is something that everyone can help with, at home, with our cars, and on our boats. Little drops of pollution coming from each of these sources add up to a big problem. But make sure you convey information about illegal discharges. It’s important for boaters to know the laws that apply.
- Engage the boater by asking lots of questions about what they do and the experiences they’ve had. Feel free to share some of your own experiences.
- When it gets busy or your audience seems disinterested, condense your talk. First address used oil recycling and hazardous waste disposal and use of the absorbent pillow/pad and fuel bib. Talk to them about the sewage information they can find on the Pumpout Nav app. Connect boaters to the locations of pollution prevention services at marinas and harbors by showing them the Tidebooks and maps.
- Don’t feel obligated to cover all the above prompts! Use this as a guideline and engage boaters by their interests and with materials in the boater kit.

For more information visit DBW’s Dockwalking [Tools & Tips](#) page ([www.BoatingCleanandGreen.com](http://www.BoatingCleanandGreen.com) Dockwalker Tab and then under Related Pages look for Dockwalker TOOLS/TIPS)

