

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



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Houseboat greywater management audits

The EPA recently completed a number of houseboat inspections for black and greywater management in the River Murray region.

Greywater is predominantly waste from a houseboat's kitchen, laundry and bathroom.

A [Code of Practice for Vessel and Facility Management](#) requires that all vessels operating on marine and inland waters to contain or treat any greywater that is produced on board.

In the past six years since the EPA first implemented the vessels program, compliance levels have reached around 80% for both commercial and private houseboats.

The EPA is aiming to achieve further compliance from the remaining vessels to reduce the risks to public health that may occur from discharging greywater into the river.

EPA Manager Water Quality, Andrew Solomon, said vessel greywater management is an EPA unlicensed compliance program, involving river vessel wastewater system audits, investigations, education, and compliance activities.

“Houseboat operators in inland South Australian waters are required to contain or treat all greywater on board with some allowances made for smaller private vessels with structural limitations.

“Environmental damage and the volume of waste created by individual boats and operators is often under-estimated especially when considered in isolation,” he said.

“When the effects are multiplied by the thousands of recreational and commercial vessels in use each day, the consequential impacts to the environment and to human health becomes significant.”

The EPA is currently working with industry and the Houseboat Hirers Association (HHA) to gain more improvements in greywater management for inland vessels and is trialling non-mechanical greywater treatment systems to meet the requirements of the Code of Practice.

The recent houseboat greywater management inspections took place in Renmark and involved 62 private vessels.

“Most people are doing the right thing and the EPA is focused on working with the remaining uncompliant vessel owners to help them satisfy the code of practice,” Mr Solomon said.

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