

Q: What are the impacts of hull cleaning on the local marine environment?

A: We put antifouling coatings on our boats to prevent or reduce colonisation by marine life. The majority of antifouling products work by releasing biocides which are toxic to marine life. Some antifouls release Copper and other metals such as Zinc which are known to have a negative impact on marine life.

When coming from a different area it is also important to think about the risk of removal of fouling organisms as this could transfer an invasive species from one area to another. If the boat you are cleaning is usually kept in the Helford or further up the river, fouling on the side of the boat should be collected and not allowed to enter the marine environment.

Performing hull cleaning using a pressure washer or scraping removes a lot of antifoul at the same time. The use of a hose, scrubbing with a hard brush or sanding or abrading with coarse paper, will have similar effects. This will cause pollution if you let it escape into the environment. It is an offence under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 if you do this. Link: [The Environmental Permitting \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2016 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Q: Can I clean my hull within the harbour?

A: There are now many marinas and boat yards around the estuary offering a full capture hull washing service where the washings are caught and the pollutants removed & disposed of to prevent pollution. We suggest that you check the methods used by your boatyard or marina. It is no longer allowed to pressure wash or scrape boats without using a method to contain the wash water or scrapings within the harbour as this would cause pollution and contravene the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016.

When preparing your hull take care with the residues, dust and flakes of paint coming from the hull. These need to be caught in some way and not allowed into the water. Further guidance can be found here from [Clean Sailors](#) and here from [Green Blue](#).

Q: Are modern low leech antifouls exempt from the above requirements due to reduced leech rates?

A: Many modern epoxy based and other “hard” antifouls still release lower but still high levels of biocides and metals into the marine environment when being pressure washed down and scraped off and therefore this would still constitute an offence under the regulations if the wash water or scrapings were not caught and disposed of as hazardous waste. Vessel owners need to contact the coating manufacture for further details. In most cases the regulations are likely to apply.

Q: Are there any cases where it is acceptable to clean my boat whilst in the water?

A: Yes, in some circumstances you can do this. There are certain requirements to be met to ensure you do this within the requirements. These are provided below and copied from the [Marine Management Organisation \(MMO\) website](#).

One of these is:

Hull Cleaning in water

A marine licence is not required for the deposit of a substance from the hull of a vessel, in the course of in water hull cleaning, provided the cleaning is carried out by hand using:

- a soft cloth
- sponge
- the bristles of a soft brush
- sandpaper with a grit size of at least P2000

This exemption does not apply when your vessel is out of the water beached or in a scrubbing bay.

This is covered by [Article 27A of the 2019 Exempted Activities Order](#).

Q: How can I dispose of the waste I create appropriately?

A: Due to the heavy metal concentration the waste will be classified as hazardous. Some marinas and boat parks provide specific bins for the disposal of antifoul scrapings. If these are not available this waste should be taken to a household waste recycling centre and disposed of in the correct waste stream.

Wash water needs to be captured and disposed of as hazardous waste some facilities will treat this water to remove the heavy metal contamination to reduce the volume of hazardous waste to be disposed of.

Q: What is the best method to capture paint flakes and dust?

A: The advice is to lay a tarpaulin on the seabed at low tide or on the ground below the vessel to catch the scrapings or if possible use a Hoover attached to the sander. See here for [further information](#).

Q: If I want to scrape my boat down on the shore and I am confident I can contain the waste can I still do this in Falmouth harbour and if so where?

A: Yes, there are locations where you can still do this. A list of areas and who to contact for permission is provided below. You will need to ensure you comply with best practice and the requirements for the location you are planning to work within.

Location	Organisation
Custom House Quay	Falmouth Harbour
Grove Place Slipway	Falmouth Harbour
Grove Place Boat park	Falmouth Harbour