



# Understanding Boat Maintenance



Every weekend, hundreds of people load up their boats or personal watercrafts and head to Grand Lake to enjoy some fun on the water. But, they may not stop to think about the impact they are having on the water quality of the lake. With so many people on the lake and its tributaries, recreational boating can leave pollutants and invasive species both in the water and on the land surrounding it.

How you maintain and care for your boat can reduce any impact you might have on the lake. Turn the page and learn how to properly maintain your boat or watercraft to help protect Grand Lake.



GRDA'S WATERSHED CONSERVATION PROGRAM

GRDA's Watershed Conservation Program

# Guard the Grand

# *Simple Boat Maintenance Tips for Cleaner Waters*

## **Boat Cleaning**

While we might not think that cleaning our boat would cause any problems, some of the cleaning materials used on boats can contain chemicals that are hazardous to humans and aquatic life. To help protect water quality and reduce the number of invasive plants and animals that might result from cleaning or rinsing your boat, think about doing these things:

1. Clean your boat away from bodies of water or locations that flow directly into a body of water.
2. Rely on water as your primary cleaning agent.
3. Find cleaning materials that are phosphate-free and biodegradable while avoiding cleaning agents that use chlorinated solvents, petroleum distillates, or lye.

Cleaning your boat also prevents the spread of invasive species that can cause harm to your boat, ecosystems, and water infrastructure. Carefully inspect your boat for animal life and aquatic plants and remove them. Drain all water from the boat, hatches, bilge, and wells before leaving the launch site and make sure your boat is completely dry before entering another waterway.



***Inspect everything that touched water!***

## Engine Maintenance

Regular engine maintenance helps avoid problems such as oil and gas leaks that can end up in the water. Follow these simple steps to avoid unnecessary pollution:

1. Pre-clean your engine with a wire brush to avoid using solvents.
2. Properly dispose of hazardous waste, such as oil filters, batteries, etc.
3. Use an identified non-toxic antifreeze, instead of the highly toxic blue-green ethylene glycol.
4. Do not completely fill fuel tanks.
5. Inspect fuel lines for deterioration and replace when necessary.
6. Avoid performing engine maintenance, such as changing oil, near or in water and do not dispose of any waste into water.
7. Follow your boat manufacturer's recommended maintenance regime.



## Painting, Staining and Sanding

When painting and staining your boat always pull your boat out of the water before painting, staining, or sanding.

The paint and other chemicals you might use can be harmful to the bugs and fish that live around your dock. Pick the proper type of paint based on if the portion of the boat needing paint - above or below water.

## Parking and Storage

Parking and storing your boat may not be something that you think about often, but properly doing so can prevent harmful pollution.

1. Park your boat or trailer over grass or other permeable areas to allow potential leaks to be filtered by the soil before it enters the water.
2. Before storing your boat for long periods of time, ensure that you have performed proper engine maintenance. This may include disconnecting your battery or removing drive belts.
3. Use a cover for your boat to protect it from the elements, particularly over exposed wood parts.



## Vessel Safety Check Program

For more information, visit the link:

<https://www.grandlakeusps.com/vessel-safety-check-program.html>



# Useful Links

## Boating Laws



<https://www.grda.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/GRDABoatingLawsBrochure2019.pdf>

## Boating Safety Classes



<https://www.grda.com/kyle-williams-boating-safety-classes/>

## Licensing Requirements



<https://www.grda.com/grda-police/>

## Life Jacket Information



<https://www.grda.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Life-Jacket-Brochure-Final.pdf>

---

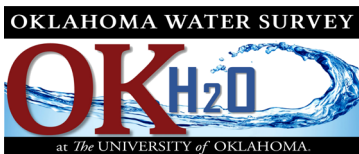
Guard the Grand is an educational program with the goal of fostering an ethic of environmental stewardship in Oklahomans residing in watersheds that flow into Grand Lake O' the Cherokees.

**Guard the Grand**  
420 Hwy 28, PO Box 70  
Langley, OK 74350

<https://www.grda.com/guard-the-grand/>  
[guardthegrand@grda.com](mailto:guardthegrand@grda.com)

Publication written by:

*Jennifer Salvo*  
*Jeri Fleming*



This publication was developed under Assistance Agreement No. NE-01F627-01 awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It has not been formally reviewed by EPA. The views expressed in this document are solely those of Grand River Dam Authority and EPA does not endorse any products or commercial services mentioned in this publication.

Photos from of pixabay.com and kissclipart.com