

Frequently Asked Questions - Oregon Ballast Water Management



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Ballast Water Management Program

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Ballast Water Reporting

- Q:** If I submit a pre-arrival report to the NBIC, will that meet Oregon's reporting requirement?
- A:** No. The NBIC does not distribute reports it has received to the states, and Oregon Law requires that reports be submitted to Oregon DEQ.
- Q:** Is a vessel required to submit a report to DEQ if it is only going to a facility on the Washington side of the Columbia River?
- A:** Yes. All vessels entering the Columbia River transit through Oregon waters and are therefore subject to Oregon ballast management requirements.
- Q:** Are multiple reports required if a vessel is going to multiple ports within state waters?
- A:** All ballast discharge details, including location, must be accurately reported. If this can be accomplished with a single report for first port of arrival in state waters, then no additional reports are necessary.
- Q:** How should I submit a pre-arrival report if I don't know where or how much ballast I will discharge? What if our operations differ from what was estimated on the form?
- A:** Estimate all information in section 5 of the ballast water report to the best of your understanding. If operations differ from estimates, amend and resend ballast report to all original recipients and select the amended box "Yes" at the top of the form.

Ballast Water Management

- Q:** What information is required in the ballast water record book?
- A:** All ballast operations must be recorded in the ballast water record book, including start/stop times and locations, and calculated volumes transferred. Ballast operations should be recorded to the record book in real time.
- Q:** What should I do if we conducted our ballast exchange less than 200nm from shore in order to avoid conducting exchange operations in rough seas?
- A:** Safety exemptions must be declared in Section 4 of the pre-arrival ballast reporting form. DEQ authorization is required prior to discharge of safety exemption water and may be expedited by notifying DEQ as soon as possible.
- Q:** Our ship is equipped with a ballast water treatment system. Can it be used?

A: Treatment systems approved by U.S. Coast Guard are acceptable, but an oceanic ballast water exchange is required – prior to treatment - if ballast water salinity is less than or equal to 18 parts per thousand (or when the vessel operator is unable to verify ballast salinity). Under these circumstances, vessels must conduct an exchange (or flush of empty tanks) resulting in ballast salinity of equal to or greater than 30 parts per thousand.

Q: Are there any special management requirements for 'NOBOB' vessels or empty ballast tanks?

A: For empty tanks to be used for ballasting and subsequent de-ballasting while in state waters, Oregon requires that empty ballast tanks be flushed with oceanic saltwater such that remaining residual ballast must achieve salinity value >30 parts per thousand.

Q: What if our voyage is too short to conduct a ballast exchange?

A: Oregon provides a "Common Water Zone" exemption from exchange requirements for tanks that were solely sourced from a port along the Pacific Coast of North America between 40 and 50 degrees north latitude. Other requests for exemption must be submitted to the department for approval.

Enforcement

Q: Does Oregon conduct vessel inspections and compliance verification activities?

A: Yes. DEQ may conduct unannounced vessel inspections. Violations may be subject to civil and criminal penalties. Minor violations may be eligible for expedited enforcement offers (EEOs).

Sediment Management

Q: What should we do if we need to clean out sediment that has accumulated at the bottom of ballast tanks?

A: Sediment may not be flushed from ballast tanks or disposed of in state waters. Sediment removal may be disposed of at a shoreside facility. All ballast tank cleaning operations must be recorded in the ballast water record book.

Alternative formats

Documents can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request a document in another format or language, call DEQ in Portland at 503-229-5696, or toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696; or email deqinfo@deq.state.or.us.