

MRAA Sends Letter to EPA

Oak Park, IL, July 21, 2008

The Marine Retailers Association of America (MRAA) sent a strongly worded letter today to the Environmental Protection Agency commenting on its proposed rule on recreational boat incidental discharges. As a reminder, a Federal District Court judge ruled that recreational boats would have to secure burdensome and expensive federal or state permits to discharge engine-cooling water, gray water, uncontaminated bilge water, and weather-caused deck run off.

MRAA stressed that the proposed rule would have a vast, unprecedented impact on recreational boating and would place an undue hardship on Americans over everyday water discharges. It would place them in a direct regulatory regime designed for land-based industrial facilities, like sewage disposal plants and commercial shipping vessels.

The proposed law also does not allow for education of the public about the rules. Individual states can implement their own laws, thus causing confusion for the boaters trying to follow the rules and at the same time enjoying a day of relaxation. Boaters will have to comply with the NPDES permit requirement after September 30, 2008, but the EPA will not be educating the boating public on what these new permits mean. There are a lot of people to educate in a very short period of time.

"MRAA sees great fault with the proposed rule and the potential of it causing great harm to the nation. We have asked the EPA to reconsider its proposed rule and to return recreational boating to the current application of the Clean Water Act," said Robert Soucy, MRAA Chairman. "As we have asked our members in Dealer Alerts, we again ask them to go to www.boatblue.org and to contact their members of Congress to voice support for S. 2766 and H.R. 5949. Passage of these two bills is imperative by September 30, 2008," added Soucy.