California’s Ballast Water Requirements

Which vessels are subject to California’s ballast water and biofouling management requirements?

Vessels that arrive at a California port, are 300 gross registered tons or more, and are carrying or capable of carrying ballast water.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Vessel Best Management Practices to prevent uptake and release of nonindigenous species.

The master, owner, operator, or person in charge of a vessel must do ALL of the following to minimize the release of nonindigenous species into California waters:

1. Discharge only the minimal amount of ballast water essential for operations.
2. Minimize ballast water discharge and uptake in marine sanctuaries, marine preserves, marine parks, or coral reefs.
3. Minimize or avoid uptake of ballast water in:
   - Areas with known infestations of nonindigenous organisms and pathogens
   - Areas near a sewage outfall
   - Areas for which the vessel has been informed of the presence of a toxic algal bloom
   - Areas of poor tidal flushing or high turbidity
   - Periods of darkness when bottom dwelling organisms may rise up in the water column
   - Areas where sediments have been disturbed (e.g., near dredging operations)
4. Clean ballast tanks regularly in mid-ocean waters, in port, or during drydock
5. Rinse anchors and anchor chains when retrieving
California’s Ballast Water Requirements

**Pacific Coast Region Definition:**
All coastal waters (within 200 nautical miles [NM] of land) on the Pacific Coast of North America east of 154 degrees W longitude and north of 20 degrees N latitude, inclusive of the Gulf of California. (Public Resources Code section 71200(I)). A map is included on page 6.

**Vessels arriving from OUTSIDE of the Pacific Coast Region (PCR) or carrying ballast water sourced from OUTSIDE of the PCR.**

**What are California’s ballast water management requirements for vessels arriving at a California port from a port outside of the PCR or carrying ballast water sourced from outside of the PCR?**

The master, operator, or person in charge of a vessel shall employ at least one of the following ballast water management practices:

- Retain all ballast water (no discharge).
- Use an alternative, environmentally sound, California State Lands Commission (Commission) or U.S. Coast Guard approved method of management.
- Discharge to an approved reception facility (none currently exist).
- Exchange ballast water in mid-ocean waters more than 200 NM from land and at least 2,000 meters deep:
  - Empty refill method: 100% volumetric replacement
  - Flow through method: 300% volumetric replacement
- Under extraordinary circumstances, a vessel may perform a ballast water exchange within an area agreed to by the Commission in consultation with the U.S. Coast Guard at or before the time of request.
- Discharge ballast water at the same location where the ballast water originated. It must be demonstrated that the water was not mixed with ballast water taken on in an area other than mid-ocean waters. Same location means an area within one NM of the berth or within the recognized breakwater of a California port.
California’s Ballast Water Requirements

Vessels arriving from WITHIN the Pacific Coast Region (PCR) AND carrying ballast water sourced from WITHIN the PCR.

What are California’s ballast water management requirements for vessels arriving at a California port from a port within the PCR and carrying ballast water sourced from a location within the PCR?

The master, operator, or person in charge of a vessel shall employ at least one of the following ballast water management practices:

• Retain all ballast water (no discharge).
• Use an alternative, environmentally sound, Commission or U.S. Coast Guard approved method of management.
• Discharge to an approved reception facility (none currently exist)
• Exchange ballast water in near-coastal waters more than 50 NM from land and at least 200 meters deep:
  o Empty refill method: 100% volumetric replacement
  o Flow through method: 300% volumetric replacement
• Under extraordinary circumstances where a ballast water management option is not practicable, a vessel may perform a ballast water exchange within an area agreed to by the Commission in consultation with the U.S. Coast Guard. NOTE: Vessels do not need to manage ballast water that is sourced and discharged at the same port within the PCR. The following port regions/port complexes are considered a single “port”:
  o All areas in the San Francisco Bay area east of the Golden Gate Bridge, including the Ports of Stockton and Sacramento.
  o The Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and the El Segundo offshore marine oil terminal.
California’s Ballast Water Requirements

Safety
Vessels are not required to manage ballast water if the vessel’s master determines that the practice would threaten the safety of the vessel, its crew, or its passengers. If the vessel master makes this determination, then the master, operator, or person in charge must take all feasible measures to minimize the discharge of ballast water in California waters and do the following:

• Document the reason in the Ballast Water Log.
• Notify the Commission at the earliest practicable time.
• Make the information in the Ballast Water Log available to Commission staff upon request.

Ballast Water Discharge Performance Standards and Ballast Water Management Required

Are vessels required to meet California’s ballast water management requirements if they are subject to the ballast water discharge performance standards?

Yes, vessels still need to employ one of the required management methods if they are subject to the ballast water discharge performance standards.

Collecting Samples for Research Purposes

Can Commission staff members collect samples from any vessel discharging ballast water in California waters?

Yes, Commission staff members may collect and analyze ballast water and sediment samples for research purposes and must be given access to ballast water tanks and sampling ports when feasible.
What are California’s ballast water discharge performance standards?
Ballast water discharge performance standards are limits on the number of organisms that may be discharged in ballast water. On January 1, 2022, California began implementing the U.S. federal performance standards for ballast water discharges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organism Size Class</th>
<th>U.S. Federal Ballast Water Discharge Performance Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisms greater than or equal to 50 micrometers in minimum dimension</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 organisms per cubic meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisms less than 50 micrometers and greater than or equal to 10 micrometers</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 organisms per milliliter (mL)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Indicator microorganisms:  
a) Escherichia coli  
b) intestinal enterococci  
c) toxicogenic Vibrio cholerae (serotypes O1 and O139) must not exceed | Must not exceed:  
a) A concentration fewer than 250 colony forming units (cfu) per 100 mL  
b) A concentration fewer than 100 cfu per 100 mL  
c) A concentration less than 1 cfu per 100 mL |

Are the federal ballast water discharge performance standards implemented by California the same as the Vessel General Permit or the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act requirements?
California’s regulations are not associated with the Vessel General Permit or the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act. The ballast water discharge performance standards implemented by California are within 33 CFR § 151.2030, which is implemented by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Which vessels will need to comply with California’s ballast water discharge performance standards?
New and existing vessels that are 300 gross registered tons or more and are carrying, or capable of carrying ballast water will need to comply if the vessel has passed their original or extended compliance date. Extensions are granted by the U.S. Coast Guard.
California's Ballast Water Discharge Performance Standards

Will vessels with an extension granted by the U.S. Coast Guard need to meet California’s ballast water management requirements?
Yes, vessels that are not past their original or extended compliance date will need to comply with California's ballast water management requirements. Details about the management requirements can be found at https://www.slc.ca.gov/misp/.

What happened to the Interim and Final California Ballast Water Discharge Performance Standards?
Interim and Final Ballast Water Discharge Performance Standards were delayed until 2030 and 2040, respectively. The Commission is required to report to the California Legislature on the availability and efficacy of treatment technology 18 months prior to each implementation date.

Monitoring Ballast Water Treatment System Functionality
Vessels using a ballast water treatment systems type approved by the U.S. Coast Guard to meet the ballast water discharge performance standards must operate the bwts in accordance with the System Design Limitations on the type approval certificate.

Alternative methods to meet California’s Ballast Water Discharge Performance Standards

Vessels can use water from a Public Water System. Please note that if the ballast tanks have had water from a source other than a from Public Water System, the ballast tanks and supply lines need to be cleaned before using this alternative method. In addition, vessels using water from a public system need to maintain a receipt, invoice, or other documentation recording which Public Water System was used.

Updated 1.1.2022
PACIFIC COAST REGION
(Effective January 1, 2020)

This guide is for illustration purposes only and should not be used to determine positioning.

Please note: All ports within the Gulf of California are part of the Pacific Coast Region.

- 50NM from land
- 200NM from land

Miles
0 125 250 500

Northwest
- Alaska
- British Columbia
- Canada
- Washington
- Oregon
- Mexico

Northwest
- Oregon
- California
- Arizona
- Nevada
- California
- Mexico
- Gulf of California
- Puerto Vallarta

Northwest
- Oregon
- California
- Arizona
- Nevada
- California
- Mexico
- Gulf of California
- Puerto Vallarta

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