



FISH WASTE MANAGEMENT

PROBLEM:

The amount of fish waste disposed into a small enclosed basin such as a marina can exceed that which exists naturally in the water at any one time. In small quantities, this fish waste is fed upon by scavenging fish (such as catfish) and is not a problem. However, in sufficient quantities where water circulation is restricted, the decomposition of this fish waste can deplete the water of dissolved oxygen, leading to water quality degradation and fish kills. This is most often a problem at marinas with large numbers of fish landings or at marinas that have limited fish landings but poor flushing. "Fish feeding" with bait or cleaned fish similarly loads marina basins with nutrients, but can also disrupt the feeding behavior of wild animals and spread diseases among them. Releasing of fish waste in the marina also may attract unwanted predators such as alligators.

GOAL:

Promote sound fish waste management through a combination of fish-cleaning restrictions, public education and proper disposal of fish waste.

IDEAS FOR YOUR MARINA TO USE:

1 Educate boaters regarding the importance of proper fish cleaning practices. Provide signage at fish cleaning stations. Encourage boaters to dispose of unwanted bait offshore and to eviscerate (gut) fish and dispose of contents at sea.



4 Establish fish cleaning stations with trash receptacles and waste water hookups.



2 Use a macerator for fish waste disposal to the central sewer or arrange for crabbers to take the carcasses.



5 Implement fish composting where appropriate.



3 Use fish waste as chum bait in open waters away from the facility.

