FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Condition 6 States: "Propeller cleaning is allowed until January 1, 2012, after which propeller cleaning is allowed as specified in regulations adopted by SLC. All other in-water hull cleaning is prohibited unless conducted using the best available technologies economically feasible, as determined by both SLC and the State Water Board. This prohibition includes underwater ship husbandry discharges (Discharge #25)."

Why is propeller cleaning allowed only until January 1, 2012?

Section 71204.6 of the California Public Resources Code (PRC) states:

On or before January 1, 2012, the commission, in consultation with the board,…shall develop and adopt regulations governing the management of hull fouling on vessels arriving at a California port or place…The regulations shall be based on the best available technology economically achievable and shall be designed to protect the waters of the state.

Propeller cleaning is considered management of hull fouling for these purposes. Until the new regulations are developed and adopted by State Lands Commission (SLC), there are no limitations on propeller cleaning in California.

What is the recommended approach to hull cleaning?

The State Water Board concurs with Section 2.2.23 of the USEPA National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Vessel General Permit (VGP), which states: *Whenever possible, rigorous hull-cleaning activities should take place in drydock, or another land-based facility where the removal of fouling organisms or spent antifouling coatings paint can be contained. If water-pressure based systems are used to clean the hull and remove old paint, use facilities which treat the washwater prior to discharge to remove the antifouling compound(s) and fouling growth from the washwater.*

What are "best available technologies economically feasible" for in-water hull cleaning?

Until the SLC develops and adopts regulations governing the management of hull fouling on vessels arriving at a California port or place (see question above), the SLC and the State Water Board believe that the following interim technologies are allowed:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

In-water cleaning for vessels with biocide-free antifouling hull coatings:

For ships with **biocide-free** hull coatings, in water cleaning is allowed using the approach described in VGP Section 2.2.23 (page 28 of VGP). Section 2.2.23 of the VGP states:

Vessel owner/operators who remove fouling organisms from hulls while the vessel is waterborne must employ methods that minimize the discharge of fouling organisms and antifouling hull coatings. These shall include:

- *Selection of appropriate cleaning brush or sponge rigidity to minimize removal of antifouling coatings and biocide releases into the water column.*
- *Limiting use of hard brushes and surfaces to the removal of hard growth.*
- *When available and feasible, use of vacuum control technologies to minimize the release or dispersion of antifouling hull coatings and fouling organisms into the water column.*

In-water cleaning for vessels with biocidal antifouling hull coatings in non-impaired waters:

In-water hull cleaning on ships with copper based hull coatings is allowed in waters that are not impaired for copper or metals. In addition to the above mentioned requirements for non-biocidal paints, in-water hull cleaning must be performed according to the following additional conditions from VGP Section 2.2.23:

Vessel owner/operators must minimize the release of copper based antifoulant paint into the water column when they clean their vessel. Cleaning of copper based antifoulant paints must not result in any visible cloud or plume of paint in the water: if a visible cloud or plume of paint develops, shift to a softer brush or less abrasive cleaning technique. A plume or cloud of paint can be noted by the presence of discoloration or other visible indication that is distinguishable from hull growth or sediment removal. Production of a plume or cloud of sediment or hull growth is normal in some cases during vessel hull cleaning, but this plume or cloud should be substantially paint free (e.g. paint should not be clearly identifiable in the plume or cloud).

In-water cleaning for vessels with biocidal antifouling hull coatings in impaired waters:

In-water hull cleaning on ships with **biocidal hull coatings** (e.g., copper based hull coatings) **is not allowed in impaired waters** until there is evidence that such hull cleaning will not contribute to copper or other pollutant loading.

Therefore, the best available technology economically feasible in these cases is hull cleaning in drydock as described above and in Section 2.2.23 of the VGP.

What and where are impaired waters located in California?

Waterbodies are considered impaired when water quality standards are not met. In such cases, these waterbodies are placed on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d), which is at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/303d_lists2006_epa.shtml

Unfortunately, many marine and estuarine waterbodies in California are impaired for copper or for metals generally, including: Huntington Harbour, Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbors, and San Pedro Bay, including the San Gabriel River Estuary and Bolsa Chica Beach, Monterey Harbor (metals), Newport Bay, Oakland Inner Harbor, San Diego Bay, Suisun Bay Marsh.

Does Condition 6 prohibit washing off the sides of the hull above the water line?

Condition 6 pertains only to underwater ship husbandry discharges (i.e., discharges resulting from the prevention or removal of fouling organisms from the submerged portions of ships). Therefore, any washing with fresh or potable water, or cleaning with non-toxic, biodegradable, phosphate-free detergents of the sides of the vessel above the antifouling coating boundary shall be considered equivalent to deck washdown (USEPA VGP discharge category 1) and will not be prohibited by Condition 6 of California's 401 Certification.