

Reporting requirements

All vessels (including articulated tug and barges, barges, and recreational vessels) of 300 gross tons and greater, except military vessels, must file a ballast water management form to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) at least 24 hours prior to entering Washington state waters and before transiting between state ports. International Maritime Organization (IMO) reporting forms are acceptable although the U.S. Coast Guard Form is preferred. The U.S. Coast Guard form can be found on the WDFW ballast water webpage at wdfw.wa.gov/ballast.

Submit reporting forms as PDF files to ballastwater@dfw.wa.gov.

Penalties for violations

Civil penalties:

WDFW may impose a civil penalty of up to \$27,500 per violation per day on a vessel owner or operator who fails to comply with the requirements of state laws including:

- Failure to file a ballast water management form,
- Failure to meet the requirements in a Notice of Correction,
- Discharge of improperly exchanged or treated ballast water without valid exemption.

Criminal penalties:

A vessel owner or operator who knowingly and intentionally falsifies a ballast water management form may be subject to criminal penalties of up to five years imprisonment in addition to any civil penalties.

Request this information in an alternative format or language at wdfw.wa.gov/accessibility/requests-accommodation, 833-855-1012, TTY (711), or CivilRightsTeam@dfw.wa.gov.

Compliance is required by law

Chapter 77.120 RCW | Chapter 220.650 WAC

Washington state Ballast water reporting and inspections



Washington Department of
FISH & WILDLIFE

Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Ballast Water Management

P.O. Box 43150
Olympia, WA 98504-3150

360-902-2189
ballastwater@dfw.wa.gov



Scan for more
information or
visit: [wdfw.wa.gov/
ballast](http://wdfw.wa.gov/ballast)

Management requirements

All vessels intending to discharge ballast water within Washington state waters are required to manage their ballast by treating with an approved ballast water treatment system and/or conducting a mid-ocean exchange. Specifically:

- Vessels using a ballast water treatment system must adhere to the operational parameters in their Alternate Management System (AMS) or Type Approval letter, issued by the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Vessels conducting an exchange during an ocean crossing must do so at least 200 nautical miles (nm) offshore in waters at least 2,000 meters deep.
- Vessels conducting an exchange during a coastal voyage must do so at least 50 nm offshore in waters at least 200 meters deep.
- All exchanges must be conducted using the Empty Refill method at 100% or greater exchange or the Flowthrough method at 300% or greater exchange.
- In the event that an installed ballast water treatment system fails or is inoperable, the vessel should contact the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port Office for their intended arrival port.

Vessels must also comply with all applicable federal laws.

Management exemptions

Ballast water exchange is not required if:

- The vessel has treated their ballast with a compliant ballast water treatment system in accordance with their AMS or Type Approval letter.
- The vessel does not intend to discharge ballast in waters of the state.
- The vessel master requests a safety exemption and files a minimum \$500 administrative fee. Unless unsafe to do otherwise, the vessel may not discharge unmanaged ballast water into waters of the state without WDFW authorization.

WDFW inspections

A WDFW Inspector will examine management records, make inquiries to evaluate compliance with Washington state laws, and may take ballast water samples.

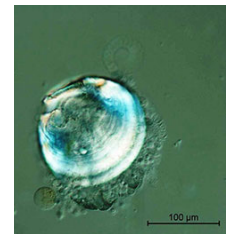
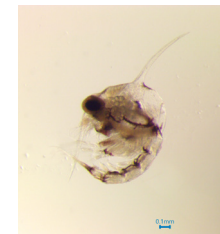


Inspectors may examine documentation and equipment related to installed ballast water treatment technology. They may request to see treatment system reports and readouts if available.

Ballast water samples, when taken, will be evaluated for the presence of invasive or potentially invasive species.

Unless managed well, **ballast water can spread aquatic invasive species** like European green crabs and zebra and quagga mussels.

An aquatic invasive species is a freshwater or marine organism that has spread beyond its native range and is either causing harm or may cause harm to environmental, economic, or human resources.



European green crab zoea (left, Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve) and zebra mussel veliger (right, California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife).

Reporting waivers

Vessel operators who do not regularly discharge ballast water while in Washington state ports and who do not wish to file a ballast water management report (BWMR) for every visit may complete and sign a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) waiver request form. The form can be found on the WDFW ballast water webpage at wdfw.wa.gov/ballast.