



PORT of
vancouver

Vancouver Fraser
Port Authority

Q&A recreational docks Burrard Inlet

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Canada

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1. Why does the port authority manage recreational docks?

The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority is the federal agency that oversees the stewardship of the Port of Vancouver. Under the *Canada Marine Act*, the port authority is responsible for the administration, management and control of land and water within its jurisdiction. This includes the waters adjacent to residential properties along Burrard Inlet, including Indian Arm and Port Moody Arm.

Landowners in this area who have waterfront property and have, or want to build, a recreational dock immediately in front of their existing residential property are required to enter into a formal licence agreement with the port authority prior to installing a recreational dock within the port authority's jurisdiction.

2. Are private mooring buoys included in the recreational dock program?

No. The port authority does not have a program to approve private mooring buoys within its jurisdiction and has no current plans to implement a program. Unauthorized private mooring buoys are currently prohibited within the port authority's jurisdiction.

Existing mooring buoys are either private mooring buoys with legacy agreements, approved commercial buoys, or unauthorized private mooring buoys.

3. Why was there a moratorium on recreational dock applications?

The moratorium was in place while the port authority reviewed our approach to recreational docks to better align with our [land use plan](#) and [Project and Environmental Review Process](#), and developed updated guidelines that will help us more effectively consider and process recreational dock applications.

4. Why is the port authority raising the licence fees for recreational docks?

As a port authority, we operate pursuant to the *Canada Marine Act* and are mandated to charge fees that align with fair market value, as indicated in our Letters Patent. Prior to 2020, annual fees for a recreational dock licence had not increased since 1993 and therefore did not reflect current market values.

As part of our work to develop the new guidelines, in 2019, the port authority requested an updated third-party appraisal valuation to determine market pricing for private moorage water lot tenures. The appraisal compared current market values for water lot tenures across Canada and in the US.

The appraisal considered available market information and private moorage rental approaches in other jurisdictions. Based on this research, three distinct zones of market influence along Burrard Inlet were identified, primarily based on water/land access points. The corresponding revised licence fee is based on the assessed market value of the water lot in each zone. Fee and zone information can be found [here](#).

5. How did you determine the environmental impacts of having a recreational dock?

The port authority considered studies on eelgrass, forage fish habitat, and identified other important marine habitat areas to develop important environmental areas. No new docks will be authorized in important environmental areas to protect these environmental resources.

Minimizing the effect that recreational docks have on the environment was a key consideration in developing the recreational dock design criteria. Recreational docks have the potential to degrade sensitive intertidal habitat, cause shading that effects marine vegetation, and introduce pollutants.

The new design criteria will minimize the size and spacing of proposed recreational docks, to help reduce the cumulative impacts of all docks.

Each new recreational dock application will be reviewed under the [Project and Environmental Review](#) (PER) process to evaluate environmental impacts and consider site specific conditions.

6. Why don't the guidelines apply to the Fraser River?

There are different considerations, including environmental, for the Fraser River from those in Burrard Inlet, and therefore there will be separate guidelines and licences for recreational docks along the Fraser River. This will be addressed in Phase 2 of the residential dock process.

7. If I need to remove my dock, do I need to get a permit for removal? Is there a cost?

Yes. A permit is required for dock removal. The cost of the permit will be dependent on the scope of the in-water works. Please refer to our [project and environmental review page](#) for further information.

8. What does the documentation fee cover?

The one-time documentation fee for licences is a property agreement document fee as set up in the port authority's fee document pursuant to Section 49 of the [Canada Marine Act](#). This fee is subject to change on an annual basis.

9. What does the one-time registration fee cover?

As part of the transition to the new 10-year recreational dock licence agreements, this registration fee covers all necessary costs associated with title searches, releases, registration and transfers at Land Titles Office.

10. Are there additional costs related to the Project and Environmental Review (PER) process?

The port authority administers a Project and Environmental Review (PER) process to ensure all projects and activities within its jurisdiction meet applicable standards and minimize environmental and community impacts. The level of review required for each project is based on potential project-related impacts, with category A reviews being the least complex and category D reviews being the most complex. For recreational docks, most maintenance, servicing and repair activities fall into category A, while new recreational dock projects fall into category B. Depending on the category of review, the applicant may be required to submit an application fee, documentation deposit, and incur other expenses as part of the PER process. The following is a summary of the application fees for each category of review.

- Cat. A no fee
- Cat. B (if no consultation) \$500 + GST
- Cat. B (if consultation is required) \$2,500 + GST
- Cat. C \$12,500 + GST
- Cat. D \$22,500 + GST

Please see our [Project and Environmental Review Application Guide](#) for more information on fees, project categories, and how to apply.

11. Where can I find information specific to my municipality?

Please visit the Municipal information PDFs on our digital platform:

- [Village of Belcarra](#)
- [District of North Vancouver](#)

12. Where can I find information on the new licence fees?

Fee information can be found on our [website](#), under the fee section.

13. Where can I find information on the new guidelines?

Please refer to the [recreational dock guidelines for Burrard Inlet](#) for further information on the guidelines.

14. I have questions. Who can I ask?

For any further questions or clarification, please contact: recdocks@portvancouver.com.

15. How are you addressing derelict vessels in the harbour?

In Canada, Transport Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard are responsible for managing derelict vessels under the [Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act](#) (WHAVA).

To report derelict vessels, please contact the Canadian Coast Guard: 1.800.889.8852. Further details can be found on the [Transport Canada](#) website.

Under the [Canada Marine Act](#), the port authority may take action to remove derelict vessels if they pose navigational or environmental safety risks such as the risk of sinking, risk of leaking fuel or oil pollutants, or anchoring in a shipping lane or an area routinely used for navigation.

Derelict vessels within our navigational jurisdiction are monitored by our operations centre and port authority harbour patrol vessels on the water, who together assess the vessel, maintain up-to-date information on the vessel, and try to contact the vessel owner for its removal. Should removal be necessary, vessel owners are responsible for the associated costs.

For more information on derelict vessels in the Port of Vancouver, please visit our [website](#).

16. How are you addressing vessels anchored without authorization

Vessels can also be reported to the port authority Operations Centre. You can call or email us at 604.665.9086 or harbour_master@portvancouver.com

17. How do you manage other debris in the harbour?

Debris, both man-made and natural is a common occurrence on the coast e.g. logs, trees, other large floating objects. The port authority will generally mark or remove debris when it presents a navigational hazard.

Note: The port authority does not recover debris from private structures (recreational docks), the beach or the intertidal zone. Dock owners are therefore responsible for the removal of debris in proximity to their dock.

How to report floating hazardous debris:

- Please call the Canadian Coast Guard Maritime Communications and Traffic Services: 250.363.6333
- When reporting hazardous debris please include the following information:
 - A picture if possible
 - Physical location
 - Direction of travel

- Time spotted
- Name and phone number

18. What is determined as a navigational hazard?

When the port authority or the Canadian Coast Guard are determining what constitutes a navigational hazard, the following are considered:

- Location of the debris in relation to the navigable channel and other navigational traffic patterns
- Navigational difficulty in the vicinity of the debris
- Depth of water over the obstruction, fluctuation of the water level, and other hydrologic characteristics in the area
- Draft, type, and density of vessel traffic or other marine activity in the vicinity of the debris
- Physical characteristics of the debris
- Possible movement of the debris
- Location of the debris in relation to vessels, obstructions or aids to navigation
- Prevailing and historical weather conditions
- Length of time that the debris has been in existence
- History of vessel incidents involving the debris

19. How are you addressing marine and land-based pollution in the harbour?

The Canadian Coast Guard is the lead agency for marine-based spills within the port authority's jurisdiction, and the Province responds to all land-based spills. All agencies will respond to or redirect calls to the correct agency depending on the incident reported and the location.

How to report marine pollution:

- Please contact the Canadian Coast Guard: 1.800.899.8852. Additional contact information can be found [here](#).
- Canadian Coast Guard Maritime Communications and Traffic Services: 250.363.6333 or [VHF Channel 16](#)
- Port authority Operations Centre at 604.665.9086 or email harbour_master@portvancouver.com

How to report land-based pollution:

- Please call the [British Columbia Emergency Coordination Centre](#) 1.800.663.3456

20. How are you addressing the dumping of wastewater or sewage in the harbour?

Under the [Canadian Fisheries Act](#), discharging deleterious substances, including wastewater, is prohibited and enforceable by Environment Canada.

Transport Canada regulations prohibit the discharge of raw sewage directly into the water.

Maine sewage discharge:

- Transport Canada is the agency responsible for managing sewage discharged from vessels

- To report an incident, please contact Transport Canada’s Office of Boating Safety at 604-666-2681 or email: TC.PAC.TM.OBS-BSN.TC@TC.GC.CA
- Find out more [here](#)

Land-based sewage discharge:

- The Province is the agency responsible for managing sewage discharged from land
- To report an incident, please contact the [British Columbia Emergency Coordination Centre](#) 1.800.663.3456

21. How can I find pump-out stations for vessels?

Details about sewage pump-out stations across the region can be found [here](#).

22. How do I dispose of my old boat responsibly?

For information on how to safely and responsibly dispose your old boat, please reference [Boating BC](#).