



# Maintaining marine navigational safety and security within the Port of Vancouver

## Fact sheet

As a [Canada Port Authority](#), we are responsible for the federal lands and waters of the Port of Vancouver on behalf of Canadians and in support of national trade objectives. Our jurisdiction includes 16,000 hectares of water, 1,500 hectares of land and hundreds of kilometres of shoreline, which borders 16 municipalities and intersects the traditional territories and treaty lands of several Coast Salish First Nations.

One of our responsibilities at the port authority is ensuring the safe and efficient movement of marine traffic and cargo within port waters. Some of the ways we manage this within our jurisdiction include:

- Communicating our safety practices and procedures within our [Port Information Guide](#)
- Monitoring marine activities through our Operations Centre 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Promoting safe recreational boating practices
- Posting ship berth depths for Burrard Inlet and Roberts Bank
- Issuing permits for port users to conduct marine operations or events

## Recreational boating

When it comes to recreational boating, our harbour patrol officers, alongside agency partners, help keep our waterways safe. Police of jurisdiction issue tickets to those who don't comply with the following safe boating practices in and around commercial shipping areas:

- **Keep clear of deep-sea ships:** Do not approach deep-sea ships at a berth or an anchor, or while in transit; stay at least 50 metres away. Avoid deep-sea shipping channels and terminals.
- **Move at a safe speed:** Reduce speed when passing other boats. Speed cannot exceed five knots in Coal Harbour, Lower Indian Arm, and within eastern portions of Port Moody Inlet. Watch for signage indicating speed restrictions.
- **Communicate plans:** Never cross in front of a vessel; always pass behind. When transiting through narrows and under bridges, signal to other ships in the area.
- **Listen to radio channels:** Monitor VHF 16 (all areas), VHF 12 (Vancouver harbour), and VHF 74 (Fraser River) radio stations for information and warnings.
- **Avoid collision:** All ships must comply with the [International Regulations for Preventing Collision at Sea, 1972](#) (Colregs). Stay on course, make your intentions clear to other ships, and do not loiter in high traffic areas and under bridges. Display the correct navigation lights at all times.
- **Carry the right gear:** All ships should be equipped appropriately for the conditions and in compliance with [Transport Canada's Small Vessel Regulations](#).
- **Discharge correctly:** Abide by ship pollution and dangerous chemical regulations. No discharges within three nautical miles of shore. Use pump stations or disposal services for grey and black water.
- **Anchor only with permission:** Anchorages in Burrard Inlet are for deep-sea ships only. Anchoring of pleasure crafts is prohibited, unless in an emergency with approval from the port authority.
- **Report incidents:** Contact our Operations Centre at 604.665.9086. Report marine distress emergencies on VHF 16, cellular \*16, or 911.

## Derelict vessels

Within our jurisdictional boundaries, we lead a number of initiatives to keep waterways clear for trade, environmental, and community purposes. This includes dealing with derelict vessels and structures, such as partially sunken ships, old dock piles, or abandoned ships in local waters.

Dealing with derelict vessels is challenging and can be very costly, depending on the circumstances and location. While owners are responsible for removing their derelict vessels, including the associated costs, the port authority may take action if there is a navigational or environmental safety risk. To date, we've invested significant resources to prevent and mitigate risks associated with derelict vessels for the safety of the community and the environment.

## Spill response

Although the port authority is not a first responder organization, our objective is to assist with the recovery of and re-establish safe and efficient operations within the port as quickly as possible following an emergency or a business interruption. We define an emergency as present or imminent events that require prompt coordination of actions with other agencies to protect the health or welfare of people and limit damage to the environment.

We consider oil and fuel spills in the Port of Vancouver an emergency. In the case of an oil or fuel spill, Canada operates under the [National Spill Response Protocol](#), which specifies that the [Canadian Coast Guard](#) is responsible for ensuring the cleanup of ship-sourced spills of oil and other pollutants. The Canadian Coast Guard can call on the port authority to conduct an initial inspection if a spill is reported in our jurisdiction. In this case, we will provide any information gathered through our 24/7 operations centre, security cameras, or our patrol boats. Additional information about spill response at the Port of Vancouver can be found on our [website](#).