



Discharge of sewage in Dutch ports

Factsheet

November 2021

The Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate (ILT) of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management inspected whether seagoing vessels complies with the regulations for the discharge of blackwater and greywater¹ in the Dutch ports and the aces routes to these ports. This factsheet informs you about the regulations and the inspections of the compliances with these rules.

Specific regulations apply in the Netherlands for the discharge of blackwater and gray water in Dutch seaports. These are laid down in the Shipping Waste (Rhine and Inland Waterways) Decree (SAB) and in the Shipping Waste Regulation (SAR). The discharge conditions depend on the size of the ship, expressed in Gross Tonnage (GT) and the number of people on board.

There are no special requirements for a ship

smaller than 400 GT and suitable for up to 15 people on board for discharge in Dutch ports. Ships with a capacity of 15 to 50 people on board may discharge black water if the sewage treatment plant (STP) complies with resolution MEPC.159(55) or higher of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Gray water may be discharged immediately.

If the ship is intended for more than 50 people on board, then in addition to the black waste water, the gray waste water must also be treated in an STP that is certified in accordance with IMO resolution MEPC.159(55) or newer. In addition, the treated waste water from this STP (the effluent) must meet specific requirements.

¹ Greywater is industrial waste water from washrooms, kitchens, dining rooms and utility rooms

Specific requirements for STP effluent for ships >50 people

The effluent must not cause visible contamination in the form of floating solids or discoloration of the water into which it is discharged.

The effluent complies with the following control values.

Parameters	Value
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	< 40 mg/l
Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	< 180 mg/l
Acidity (pH)	6 – 8,5
Free chlorine	< 0,5 mg/l

Other requirements:

- The installation is sufficiently large and is demonstrably well maintained and managed.
- The sludge from the installation may not be discharged into the Dutch waters.

Supervision by ILT

The ILT checks whether the ship discharges effluent from the STP into Dutch waters and, if so, whether the discharge conditions are met. To this end, the ILT examines the engine room and assesses how maintenance is carried out. The inspectorate can also take a sample of the effluent. This sample is examined by a certified laboratory. It is expected to take 1 week until the analysis is available and the ILT has received the results.

Even if the ship does not discharge, the ILT can investigate whether the STP meets the conditions and whether it is properly maintained.



Follow-up actions

If the ship discharges effluent from the STP into Dutch waters and the installation does not meet the conditions of the SAB, the ILT will take enforcement action. In that case, the offender will receive a warning, an order subject to a penalty or a fine. The flag state will be informed. If the certificate of the STP is not in order or the analysis of the effluent shows that the STP is not functioning properly, the ILT will take further action. The captain, the ISM manager and the flag state will be informed accordingly.

In case no irregularities are found, the captain is also informed about the outcome of the inspection.

The Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate works at improving safety, confidence and sustainability in regard to transport, infrastructure, environment and housing.

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