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From the U.S. Coast Guard Regulations

Types of MSDs

The USCG recognizes three MSD equipment classes:

- a. Type I. A flow-through discharge device that, under the test conditions described in 33 CFR 159.121, produces effluent having fecal coliform bacteria count no greater than 1000/100 milliliters, and no visible floating solids. A Type I MSD is commonly a physical/chemical type (macerator/chlorinator).
- b. Type II. A flow through discharge device that, under the test conditions described in 33 CFR 159.121, produces effluent having a fecal coliform bacteria count no greater than 200/100 milliliters, and suspended solids no greater than 150 milligrams/liter. A Type II MSD is commonly a biological (aerobic digestion) plant, but several physical/chemical plants are certified as Type II MSDs.
- c. **Type III.** A device designed to prevent the overboard discharge of treated or untreated sewage, or any waste derived from sewage. Most Type IIIs are holding tanks, but there are also vacuum collection systems, incineration systems, recirculation systems, and **a composting system.**

It is vital to recognize that an MSD type is based on the equipment installation. For example, a malfunctioning flow-through discharge device that has a closed overboard discharge valve is NOT a no-discharge device. It is a broken machine.

Reference 33 CFR 159.53 General Requirements

Certification of Holding Tanks

Type III MSDs that store only sewage and flushwater at ambient air pressure and temperature are certified by definition. There will be neither a label nor a letter, so the inspector should verify that the installation is as it is claimed. The tanks should be adequate to retain the wastewater generated while the vessel is within U.S. waters. Gray waters and galley wastes should not be directed to such a system, because the rotting food can cause the tank contents to putrefy, worsening the situation. The following are not acceptable as being a Type III MSD: (1) use of piping as a holding tank or (2) securing the direct overboard discharge piping from the head with a valve. Type III systems installed on a vessel before 30 January 1975 are certified under 33 CFR 159.12(b). These devices were not reviewed; no certification letter or label is necessary.

»Reference 33 CFR 159.123. Certification of certain Type III devices