

The discharge of all garbage, most importantly all forms of plastic, is prohibited into the navigable waters of the United States and into all other waters except as specifically allowed below. A person who violates these requirements is liable for civil and/or criminal penalties.

Within 3 nautical miles of land

Discharge of all garbage is prohibited.

3 to 12 nautical miles from land

Permitted
Ground food waste that is able to pass through a screen with openings no larger than 1 inch.

12 or more nautical miles from land

Permitted
Food waste.
Wash water.
Cargo residues and cleaning agents may be discharged en route if not harmful to the marine environment.

Regional, state, and local restrictions on garbage discharges also may apply.

