



The Best TOILET PAPER For Your Boat

WE ALL USE IT, BUT HOW DO WE CHOOSE IT? HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO PICK THE RIGHT TP FOR YOUR BOAT

By Missy Goes Boating

ACCORDING TO A recent study by Charmin, the average consumer uses 8.6 sheets per trip to the wash-room, that's a total of 57 sheets per day with a typical roll lasting about five days. A marine head can be a finicky thing and more than one has fallen prey to a simple piece of toilet paper. To reduce the chances of clogs and blockages and to extend the range of your holding tank it may be wise to reduce the amount of toilet paper you use while aboard, though never at the expense of effectiveness.

NOWADAYS PRETTY MUCH ALL toilet papers break down well in septic systems, however, thinner is better. A one-ply toilet paper will break down much easier and is best in recreational

vehicles and boats. It isn't as soft or thick as household toilet paper, but it is much friendlier to your holding tank. Biodegradable toilet paper is particularly useful on a boat since it dissolves faster and requires less water than standard toilet paper. The experts say that specialty brands do break down more rapidly than the household stuff and they don't contain the dyes and perfumes of some of the more expensive bathroom tissues. Remember that in addition to the head itself, your system may have a macerator on the pump that empties the holding tank. It is important to use a toilet paper that dissolves quickly so it doesn't form clumps, clog the system and block efforts to empty the holding tank.

THERE IS A QUICK AND EASY TRICK to figure out if your favourite brand of

toilet paper is marine friendly:

- 1 Take an empty glass jar (we used an empty spaghetti sauce jar)
- 1 Fill it at least three-quarters full with water
- 1 Put in two sheets of toilet paper
- 1 Shake vigorously for 30 seconds

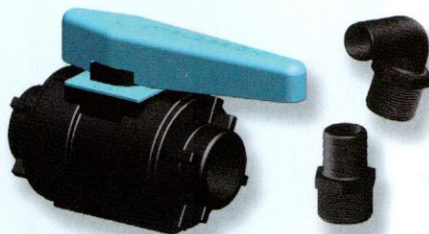
If it is shredded or beginning to dissolve, you know it is safe for your marine system. You can also leave the TP in the jar overnight and see if it has dissolved. For an example of non-marine friendly paper, try this same test with a Kleenex. It remains intact and looks like one mushy glob just waiting to clog your marine head!

While most toilet tissues these days are biodegradable, you may want to consider using 100 percent post-consumer

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recycled toilet paper so more trees do not have to be cut down. Choosing a non-bleached version won't make a difference to the effectiveness, but will prevent the waste from leaching dioxin into the environment after you dump it.

WE SPEND ENOUGH MONEY ON marine specific products so why spend more on TP? Well, according to Seventh Generation, if every household in the U.S. (I couldn't find a Canadian study) could replace just one roll of 500-sheet virgin fibre bathroom tissue with a 100 percent recycled one, we could save 448,000 trees, over one million cubic feet of landfill space and 161 million gallons of water, a year's supply for 1,270 families of four.

So which brands are the crowd favourites? Angel Soft (which is inexpensive and easy to find), Thetford AquaSoft, Thetford RV/marine toilet tissue and Capco (which are slightly more expensive and found at specialty camping and RV retail stores) received high marks along with Campa-Chem (available at WalMart). Liquid Gold, which is made for RVs, is 100 percent recycled and chlorine-free. Scott Rapid Dissolving Tissue claims to break up four times faster than other leading brands. Specially made for your RV, boat or septic system, this bath tissue is Scott Clog Clinic tested and approved. Seventh Generation 100 percent Recycled Bathroom Tissue uses 100 percent recycled paper with a minimum 50 percent post-consumer recycled paper, is whitened without chemicals containing chlorine and has no added dyes or fragrances.

Greenpeace lists the best toilet papers for the environment, many of which come in one-ply, 100 percent recycled versions that are septic safe, including Seventh Generation.

Out of curiosity, I grabbed a roll of our Costco Kirkland Signature Embossed Toilet Paper for the test. It is two-ply and septic system safe, but not made with recycled materials. I threw it in the jar, gave it a shake and wouldn't you know it, it dissolved quickly.

For more environmental ratings on toilet paper, check the National Defense Council ratings. Yes, there is a website for that. I am a big fan of Seventh Generation and Scott Rapid Dissolving. And, seriously, shouldn't all toilet paper be made from recycled materials? It really is a full circle moment. @



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