

## You know your marina needs a facelift when...

Safety. Market pressure. These are the two most common reasons why marina owners upgrade their waterfront facilities. "It's usually emergency safety issues or concerns about competition that trigger the decision to improve marina facilities," says Sam Phlegar, vice president with



Applied Technology & Management. "Marina owners realize they've got an aging facility that needs a berth or utility replacement or that they need to provide additional amenities for boaters."

According to Phlegar, one of the biggest challenges for marina owners is when their facilities deteriorate and budget constraints prevent a complete overhaul. "Owners should never allow the condition of their marina to reach the point where it completely compromises public safety," he says. "The condition of marina facilities shouldn't be something they assess every 10 years— it should be assessed around the clock."

Once you make the decision to peek under the hood, the next question is what to look for. Here are some warning signs:

- **Deteriorating docks.** Wind and waves have a cumulative adverse impact on marinas— facilities take continuous pounding from the elements, which causes significant wear and tear. Dock connections and mooring pile integrity are challenged in the marine environment. Sea walls reach their useful life, waterfront property can erode, and slips deteriorate. Decking gaps, splintering, marine boring damage, rust, and excessive movement in modules are critical early signs that can point to major dock damage.
- **On-site hazards.** It's essential to properly maintain electrical systems due to their proximity to water. "The condition of electrical systems always comes to mind when you're considering customer and employee safety," says Marc Phillips, general manager of the Halifax Harbor Marina (Daytona Beach, FL). "You don't want anyone being shocked or jolted. If your marina is 30 to 40 years old, chances are the wiring is in need of replacement."
- **Empty slips.** Dockside amenities can make or break your marina's appeal, especially to transient boaters. Marinas that can't keep up with their neighbor's amenities are likely to be passed over. "We've seen occupancy falls at the expense of competition," Phlegar says. "When marina owners realize →



## Free Money?

Marina owners can upgrade their deteriorating or outdated facilities without digging into their own pockets— the secret is knowing where to look for cash for capital improvements. Here are some sources of funding for marina improvements and waterfront development:

**Boating Infrastructure Grant—** assists marinas with building facilities and providing better access for transient non-trailerable boats 26 feet and larger.

- Funding Agency: US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Eligible Applicants: Funds are available to public and private agencies and marinas and other facilities that provide transient tie-up opportunities for non-trailerable (26' or over in length) recreational boats.
- Funding Cycle: Funds are distributed each year over a four-year period. FY2003's application deadline is August 23, 2002.
- Funding Source: The Sport Fish Restoration Account of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund. The funds result from a Federal excise tax on fishing equipment and motorboat fuels.
- Contact information: State Division of Fish and Wildlife offices

**Clean Vessel Assistance Program—** provides funds to states for the construction, renovation, operation, and maintenance of pumpout and dump stations to improve water quality.

- Funding Agency: US Department of Environmental Conservation
- Eligible Applicants: Public and private marinas
- Funding Cycle: Annual; deadline typically fall
- Funding Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Contact information: Lisa E. Van Alstyne, (800) 882-9721 →



Applied Technology & Management, Inc. (ATM) is an environmental, coastal, and water resources engineering firm. Our experienced staff of over 70 professionals share a common goal - to forge long-term relationships with our clients.

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## The Waterfront

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## [Facelift continued]

that they're getting slighted, it prompts a decision to make some improvements."

- Outdated upland facilities.** While potable water and fire-fighting and life-saving equipment come standard at most marinas, boaters are looking for modern amenities like high-capacity electrical connections, wireless phone/fax/Internet, dedicated wastewater connections, and cable/satellite TV connections. "Marinas need to be more user-friendly," says Matt Driscoll, manager of the Cooper River Marina (North Charleston, SC). "Boaters are looking for more than just wet slips— they want tennis courts, swimming pools, and golf cart services. Marina owners need to make it easier for boaters to get out and enjoy themselves."

Unfortunately, when it's time to upgrade marina facilities, a lot of owners take a patchwork approach. "Marina owners are more likely to repair something instead of replacing it," says Driscoll. "Too many times, I've seen marina operators robbing Peter to pay Paul. They scavenge one part of the marina to repair another— even nuts and bolts— which can lead to unsafe docks, closed slips and lost revenue.

Addressing minor issues before they become major problems is key to keeping marina facilities in top condition without resorting to piecemeal solutions. "It's easier and more cost effective to repair something that's damaged instead of completely broken," Driscoll says. "Consistent preventative maintenance is something marina owners need to do if they want their facilities to last." ☉

**"The condition of marina facilities... should be assessed around the clock."**

## [Money continued]

**Clean Marina Grant Program**— a voluntary program where grant funds are used to implement "Marina Action Measures" are described in the *Clean Marina Action Plan*.

- Funding Agency: Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Eligible Applicants: Public and private marinas
- Funding Cycle: Annual; anticipated deadline November
- Funding Source: US Environmental Protection Agency

- Contact information: Jan R. DeLaney, (850) 488-5600 x178

*Similar programs are available in North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland and Virginia. Visit these states' websites for more information.*

**Florida Inland Navigation District Waterways Assistance Program**— provides financial assistance for the development and implementation of waterway related improvement projects.

- Funding Agency: Florida Inland Navigation District
- Eligible Applicants: Municipal and county governments located within the district's boundaries
- Funding Cycle: Annual; deadline typically April
- Funding Source: Ad valorem taxes
- Contact information: Mark Crosley, (561) 627-3386

**Derelict Vessel Removal Program**— assists local governments with the cost of removing derelict vessels from coastal waters.

- Funding Agency: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Eligible Applicants: All coastal local governments
- Funding Cycle: Annual; deadline typically summer
- Funding Source: Florida Coastal Protection Trust Fund
- Contact information: Wendy Huszagh, (850) 488-5600 x173

## CALENDAR

**April 25-28, 2002**

*The Suncoast Boat Show*  
Sarasota, FL

For more information, call (800) 940-7642.

**May 2-5, 2002**

*Bay Bridge Boat and Yacht Show*  
Kent Island, MD

For more information, call (410) 268-8828.

**May 6-7, 2002**

*22nd Marine Industry Legislative Conference*  
Washington, DC

For more information, call Kelly Rote-Bobek at (202) 721-1608.

**June 3-6, 2002**

*Marina Aftermarket Accessories Trade Show 2002*

For more information, call Arlene Baxter at (312) 946-6216.