This summer, boaters in upstate New York were given some of the tools of stewardship when New York Sea Grant, marina operators, a products manufacturer, and two industry organizations united to distribute information and products to promote clean boating at the Syracuse Boat Show on Lake Ontario, Oneida and Skaneateles Lakes, and the Niagara River.

"More than 2,700 bags with an oil absorbent bilge sock, fuel nozzle bib, New York State Boating Guide, a list of pumpout stations and other useful information (see photo) were distributed as part of a pilot project to promote practices to keep New York’s waters clean,” says David White, NYSG’s Great Lakes Extension Program Coordinator and national chair of the Marine Environmental Education Foundation.

“Every bilge sock that saves oil from going overboard is a plus for the environment,” says Wayne Carroll, Brewerton Boat Yard owner. Adds Skaneateles Sailboat Shop co-owner John Jablonski “This program is a positive way to help boaters have a more pleasurable and safe day.”

On Sodus Bay, 100 Lake Ontario boaters discovered bags with local event fliers “courtesy of New York Sea Grant and Arney’s Marina.”

“We’re teaching consumers that keeping a clean boating environment (can be) easy and inexpensive,” says Geoff Smith of Smith Boys Marina, North Tonawanda. The Boating Industries Association of Central New York and the Western New York Marine Trade Association co-sponsored the project. Anchor Environmental Solutions of Troy, Ohio, provided the bibs and bilge socks.

—Kara Lynn Dunn