

Washington MOU Signed

On April 20th, 2004 the State of Washington and the North West CruiseShip Association signed a new agreement to regulate waste discharges from the vessels.

The third of it's kind, the agreement allows the industry, which is growing rapidly in Washington state, to thrive while protecting the environment.

Discussions between the state and the cruise ship industry over several months, result in an agreement that bans wastewater discharges in state water from vessels operated by eight cruise lines that are members of the Northwest Cruise Line Association, except those equipped with advanced treatment systems certified by the Coast Guard.

The agreement allows ships to release treated wastewater while traveling at least 7 mph one nautical mile from a Seattle port berth, if they operate the approved treatment systems. Additional provisions allow discharge in port if the systems use additional disinfectant and have emergency shutoff systems.

In addition the agreement provides for State Ecology Department officials to board vessels while they're in port to collect wastewater samples, which will be tested by independent labs. The treated waste ships are allowed to discharge will actually be cleaner than the effluent from many land based treatment facilities.

Gov. Gary Locke called the agreement "a positive sign for the future of the (state's) cruise industry. ... By working together, we will do what is best for both business and the environment in our state."

The industry in Seattle has grown rapidly, from six vessel calls in 1999 to an expected 140 this season, starting with the call of the Amsterdam on April 20th at Terminal 30.

Great Lakes cruise line industry a \$36 million dollar impact

A recent study shows the Great Lakes cruise industry has just been completed and the results is substantially ahead of expectations.

The study, which was authorized by the directors of the Great Lakes Cruising Coalition (GLCC), focuses on the 2004 cruise season and targets those cruise vessels with Great Lakes and upper St Lawrence cruise inventory for sale to the public.

Total value of Great Lakes cruising in 2004: \$36.8 Million

Total cruise-land packages for the same period: \$1.9 million

Sightseeing revenue for the same period: \$2.1 Million

Gift purchases for the same period: \$0.7 Million

Marine services & supplies for the same period: \$4.0 Million

Number of cruise ships offering Great Lakes Cruises in 2004: 9 Vessels

Number of departures available for the same period: 82