

A Sea of Styrofoam:

Ending Polystyrene Pollution in BC waters

THE ISSUE: Expanded polystyrene foam (EPS or “Styrofoam”) is a type of plastic foam commonly used in dock construction, aquaculture, and fishing floats. As a result, many dock floats are composed of unprotected expanded polystyrene foam (EPS), also known as Styrofoam. This EPS breaks down over time and enters BC waterways. BC lags behind other regions, including Ontario, Oregon, and Washington, in its failure to address this pressing issue.

BC POLYSTYRENE FACTS:

- EPS pollution in BC has **serious negative impacts** on coastal communities and aquatic ecosystems.
- In 2019, the Province met with interested parties including municipal governments, Indigenous Nations, industry, environmental organizations, and the public. Polystyrene pollution was **the only problem that was raised by all five interest groups**.
- In BC, the composition of dock floats is currently **completely unregulated**.
- Many regions, including Washington, Oregon, and Ontario, **banned unprotected polystyrene foam** years, or even decades ago.
- Dock floats made of air-filled plastic, HDPE pipe, encapsulated EPS, recycled materials, and other **alternative flotation materials are currently being manufactured right here in British Columbia**.

The solution is simple. Alternatives are available. It is time for the Province of British Columbia to catch up with its neighbors and **ban the use of unencapsulated polystyrene in BC’s aquatic environments**

Regional Bans on EPS: A Timeline

Oregon State ○ 1992



Washington State ○ 2013

San Francisco, USA ○ 2016

Pender Harbour, BC ○ 2018

Province of Ontario ○ 2021

British Columbia ↓ ????

