



# Pompano Launches New Canal Cleaning Boat

BY MARIE PULEO

Every month, a cleanup crew patrols over 100 of Pompano's canals on a work boat, fishing out trash using nets and gaffs, a slow and difficult process. But the

designed for canal cleaning," said Russ Ketchem, the city's solid waste operations manager. "We would purchase a vessel and modify it to suit our needs. This new boat was actually designed for canal cleaning operations, so it is much more efficient and effective."



The new trash collection boat, which cost \$93,000, was purchased with funds collected through the monthly fee that residents pay for garbage collection.

Around 1,000 cubic yards of debris are hauled out of the city's canals annually, said Ketchem. This debris has included everything from plastic bottles, coconuts, seaweed and palm fronds, to whole palm trees, dock pilings, floating docks, mattresses, refrigerators, lots of dead animals (iguanas, dogs, ducks, a wild boar, a skinned alligator and several manatees), and even other motor boats.

"When I see debris in the water, I have to get it out because it could damage a boat motor," said Jerry Burke, who has been a Pompano canal boat captain for the past 15 years.

To remove large items from the water, Burke secures them with a tough, double-threaded Teflon rope and drags them behind the boat. Some items, such as refrigerators, need to be

removed with a dredge boat.

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Even with the new trash skimmer boat, workers will still need to manually dip-net or gaff items out of the water when the debris is under boat docks or too close to obstructions, such as other boats or seawalls.

The new, state-of-the-art canal cleaning vessel – a catamaran made of marine-grade aluminum – "drives" over the floating debris, catching it in a basket-like compartment between the two hulls. When the basket is full, it is removed from the boat, emptied into a trash truck and placed back on the boat.

"The city has never had a boat that was actually

The old boat, a pontoon the city has had since 2002, will continue to be used in addition to the new boat during certain times of the year, when larger amounts of debris are pushed into the canals, said Ketchem.

Pompano's canal cleaning operation, which covers 27 miles of canal waterway, is divided into four zones, with each zone taking about one week to complete. The city only cleans the canals fed from the ocean and Intracoastal Waterway, which are east of Dixie >>>

**Scoo-Bee, the new canal cleaning boat** FRONT Beth Dubow, Recycling Coordinator; Kerven Lindor, Solid Waste Foreman  
ON BOAT Jerry Burke, Boat Captain; Winston Blake, Boat Captain  
Photo by Jeff Graves