

Draining the Bilges

By Robin Whittle, Shrimper 124 (*Bumble Chugger*) (Spring 2009)

For some time now I have been working out how to drain the bilges more effectively (Mark 1 boats). A few years back I fitted two clips to the bulkhead to hold a hand pump. Whenever water collected in the bilges I used this to pump it out. It wasn't ideal and it usually meant removing the floor boards so that the end of the pump (with a six inch tube extension) could be threaded deep enough into the keel.

I have now bought a strong nylon 3-way valve from Mailspeed – 'Marine Y Valve' for 1 inch hose, Part No. 18600-01 (see photo right). This proved to be just what I wanted. I spent quite a long time planning how and where I would fit it. This paid off in the end as it all went together surprisingly easily.



The layout showing how it is fitted is illustrated in the figure below, viewed from inside the cabin towards the bulkhead to the cockpit well. Cutting the existing hose in just the right place, so that it could be used for the new arrangement, was crucial. This meant that I did not have to take it off the sump which would have been tricky. I used a hot air blower to help ease the hose over the spigots of the new valve. I took the hose off the hand pump for the third connection and fed it down into the bilges. I am very relieved to say that it all works!

