



Town of Dennis, MA

Harbormaster Department
P.O. Box 2060 South Dennis, MA 02660

Tel: (508)760-6159 Fax: (508)394-8309

BOATER'S GUIDE FOR HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

A) General Preparedness:

1. INSURANCE FOR YOUR VESSEL.

- If you decide to obtain insurance for your vessel, review your policy carefully to confirm what's covered and if you're required to haul your vessel in the event of a storm.

2. INVENTORY ALL PROPERTY ON YOUR VESSEL.

- Inventory all property on your vessel (with video if possible). Be sure to write down serial numbers for the engine and electronics and the vessel's hull identification number.

3. KEEP ALL VESSEL DOCUMENTS IN A SAFE, SECURE AND EASILY-ACCESSIBLE LOCATION.

- Remember that you must keep your registration on your boat when it is underway.
- Keep your vessel's title, bill of sale and any information pertaining to your electronics or engines at home.

4. MAKE PLANS IN ADVANCE FOR HAUL-OUT AND STORAGE.

- Where will you put your vessel once it's out of the water?
- How will you secure your vessel?
- Check the tide before you head to the launch ramp.

5. CHECK WITH YOUR MARINA RE: EMERGENCY PROCEDURES OR MANDATORY HAUL-OUT.

- If your vessel is moored or berthed at or serviced by a private marina or marine contractor, check with them regarding their emergency preparation or haul-out procedures in the event of a storm.

- Remember that immediately prior to a hurricane, marinas will be very busy. Be patient.

B) When a HURRICANE WATCH is issued (possible threat within 36 hours):

1. THE FOUR (4) DANGERS TO YOUR BOAT

- There are four (4) dangers to your boat regardless of whether it is on a trailer or in the water: **WIND, RAIN, HIGH WATER, and FLYING DEBRIS.**

2. PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE WEATHER

- TV
- Local radio stations
- NOAA Weather radio

3. WHEN IN DOUBT, HAUL IT OUT!

- It is always best to haul your vessel and your dinghy or pram prior to a storm's arrival. If you are able to haul out, the following procedures should be considered:
 - a) Inspect your trailer to confirm that it is in good condition.
 - b) Store your vessel in a garage or close to your house. Avoid storing your vessel between two buildings where a wind tunnel might be created.
 - c) Lower and securely lash any antennas or bimini tops.
 - d) Secure all loose gear including hatch covers, canopies, console covers, etc.
 - e) Lash your vessel to trees or ground anchors on all four corners.
 - f) You might also consider inserting the drain plug and partially filling your vessel with water. Remember that this will increase the weight of your boat so place wood blocks between the trailer frame and the leaf springs. Avoid covering batteries with water.

4. PREPARE YOUR MOORED OR BERTHED VESSEL.

- The following website provides detailed information and diagrams for preparing your vessel for a storm:
<http://www.boatus.com/hurricanes/brochure.asp>

- **If you have no choice but to leave your vessel in the water, the following procedures should be considered:**
 - a) **If applicable, un-step the mast and lash all sails and halyards.**
 - b) **Lower and securely lash any antennas or bimini tops.**
 - c) **Secure all loose gear including canopies, console covers, etc. Seal hatch covers and doors with duct tape and tape X's on windows.**
 - d) **Remove important documents and electronics from the vessel.**
 - e) **IF MOORED, set additional anchors in the anticipated direction of the strongest wind. Increase scope to 10:1 and install chafing gear on all lines (*garden hose or fabric with duct tape work well*). When securing lines, try to use through-hull towing eyes when possible as cleats on the vessel are the weakest link.**
 - f) **IF BERTHED, put out as many fenders as possible and double-up all dock lines. If possible, secure lines to bulkheads or pilings instead of dock cleats.**

C) After the storm:

- 1. CHECK WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT IT IS SAFE TO APPROACH THE SHORE**
 - **Harbormaster Department**
 - **U.S. Coast Guard**
 - **Fire Department**
 - **Police Department**
- 2. DO NOT RUSH TO YOUR BOAT**
 - **If your vessel was moored or berthed, do not immediately rush down to your vessel's location and put yourself or others at risk. Ensure that safe access is available. Do not try to board a partially sunken vessel as it may capsize.**
- 3. FUEL, OIL, OR CHEMICAL SPILLS**
 - **Pay close attention and watch out for fuel, oil, or chemical spills that may have occurred as a result of the storm. Report any spills or other hazards to local authorities immediately.**

4. PHOTOGRAPH OR VIDEOTAPE “AFTER” CONDITION

5. CONTACT YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY

- **Request an adjustor or marine surveyor.**

If you have any additional questions regarding hurricane preparedness, please feel free to contact the Dennis Harbormaster Department at (508)385-5555.