

# Hurricane Boater Safety

The Maryland coastal areas are very popular for boaters. But, they are also very vulnerable to intense coastal weather including hurricanes. Hurricanes are very unpredictable and can be deadly. Boaters need to be aware of the hurricane threat in Maryland and should know what to do if a storm is approaching.

## Here are some tips to help boaters develop their own hurricane preparedness plan:

- Early preparation and planning are key.
- Purchase and stow line specifically for use in the event of a hurricane. As a general rule, the line should be twice the diameter of your normal line.
- Monitor National Weather Service marine broadcasts and begin preparing at the earliest hurricane alert stage.
- **EVACUATE** your boat if emergency management officials advise you to do so!
- All boat hurricane preparations should be completed 48 hours before the hurricane arrives to allow you to concentrate on your family and home.
- Secure all hatches and doors and tape all windows from the inside.
- Check battery for charge and make sure bilge pumps are working.
- Shut off fuel lines at the tank and close thru hull fittings.
- Remove all electronics and valuables to prevent destruction or theft.



## If you have a trailerable boat:

- Remove the boat from the water and secure both boat and trailer on high land.
- Trailer should be firmly anchored to prevent or minimize damage.

## If you have a boat on a dock:

- **DO NOT STAY ON YOUR BOAT DURING A HURRICANE!**
- Remove all articles on deck including bimini tops, plastic side enclosures, sails and dinghies. Store these items on land.
- If possible, un-step the mast and secure it on land.
- Double up lines including spring lines. Use several cleats to distribute load on the boat. Allow as much line as possible for tide and storm surge.
- Attach chafing gear such as reinforced radiator hose where lines will rub. Provide several feet of chafing hose on each side of rub locations.

- Disconnect electric, water and other connections from dock.

**If you will be anchoring out:**

- **DO NOT STAY ON YOUR BOAT DURING A HURRICANE!**
- Have a pre-planned "hurricane hole".
- Avoid shoal areas and look for areas with high embankments.
- Consult *CHAPMAN'S* or other responsible literature for best anchorage and anchoring methods.