

## **Emergency Preparedness for Marinas** ***Before, During, and After A Storm***

The key to protecting a marina during hurricanes or any severe threatening weather is planning, preparation, and timely action. The following precautions and checklists are meant as guidelines only to be used by the marine community.

Each marina needs a plan unique to the type of vessels stored, local boating environment, the severe weather conditions likely to occur in that region, and the characteristics of safe and protected harbors.

**Prior to Storm season, planning and preparation are key issues.** A safe plan of action, compiled ahead of time, is a necessity in emergency preparedness. Having your employees and boat owners informed of the procedures and also having your property secured and documented will allow your preparations to go smoothly and quickly when time is an issue.

- ✓ Develop a detailed plan of action to secure the marina properties and vessels; and then practice the plan to ensure that it works.
- ✓ Inform boat owners of their responsibilities in preparing their vessel(s) and/or removing the vessel(s) prior to the storm, if necessary.
- ✓ Take photos of the marina properties from all angles.
- ✓ Install window shutters or have pre-cut plywood fitted for all windows.
- ✓ Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and down spouts.

**When a storm watch is issued, preparation becomes the marina's priority.** This is not the time to begin planning; this is the time to execute your plan of action. Each employee and boat owner should be prepared to follow through with the necessary responsibilities as needed. It is important to remain calm; but proceed in a timely manner.

- ✓ Notify all employees to follow the guidelines and procedures outlined in the practiced safety plan.
- ✓ Notify all boat owners to complete their storm preparations within a specific time frame. Advise the owners NOT to stay onboard.
- ✓ Monitor your local TV or radio station for weather updates.
- ✓ Secure all windows and doors in the marina's properties with shutters, pre-cut plywood or other approved window coverings.
- ✓ Secure, remove, or store all outside items that may be affected by strong wind gusts.
  - This includes outside furniture, picnic tables, boat trailers, landscaping items, etc.
- ✓ If you have a pool, prepare it for the storm.
  - Pool furniture and items can be placed into a pool.
  - Drop the water level in the pool by 1 or 2 feet.
  - Turn off electricity to the pool
  - Add extra chlorine to compensate for heavy rains.
- ✓ Fill fuel tanks early; as gas supply may be limited after the storm.
- ✓ Turn refrigerators and freezers to coldest settings.
- ✓ Store at least one gallon of water per person per day for employees remaining at the marina.
- ✓ Freeze water in plastic jugs.
- ✓ Get extra cash for expenses in the event that banks are closed after the storm.
- ✓ Back-up all computer data and keep the disks in a safe area.



- ✓ Protect computer and electrical equipment by moving them away from windows and covering them with plastic bags. Secure items in a *safe room* if possible.
- ✓ Valuable documents and equipment should not remain on floor level in the event of flood. Place these items on high shelves or cabinets.
- ✓ Charge all batteries, flashlights, and cell phones.

**As the storm approaches, the preparations should be completed.** Do not attempt to continue preparations during severe weather. Your focus now is on protecting yourself and others from the elements.

- ✓ Close all interior doors. Secure and brace external doors, particularly double inward-opening doors and garage doors.
- ✓ Determine if an evacuation order applies to your area.
  - If so, evacuate quickly, but safely.
  - Turn off electricity, water, and gas if instructed to by authorities.
- ✓ If an evacuation order is not issued, consider leaving the area anyway for safety reasons.
- ✓ If remaining on property, notify friends/relatives/employees of your decision and location.
- ✓ Move your supplies into a *safe room* and **REMAIN INSIDE.**

**After the storm, damage inspection should begin in a safe and timely manner.** Monitor your battery operated radio for information on the location of the severe weather. A lull in the storm could be the “eye” of the hurricane and winds will increase in intensity once again. Make sure the storm has passed before attempting any repairs.

- ✓ Wait for an *all clear* from local authorities before you go outside or drive.
- ✓ Assess and begin clean up of the most dangerous conditions, such as broken glass.
- ✓ When venturing outside, avoid downed or dangling utility wires. Fallen trees and water puddles may have power lines tangled or laying in them.
- ✓ Secure all damaged properties as quickly as possible.
  - Cover damaged roofs with tarps.
  - Broken windows and doors must also be covered to prevent theft and further damage from rain.
- ✓ Check all utilities for damage.
- ✓ Do not use tap water for drinking.
- ✓ Operate generators outdoors in a well-ventilated area.
  - Do NOT plug portable generators into the building’s electrical outlets.



While these suggestions may not be applicable to all marinas in all instances, it is hoped that common sense and good judgment will prevail. Should even one of these suggestions save a life, prevent an injury, or reduce property damage, their purpose will have been served. Prepare in advance and be safe!