

HURRICANE PREPARATION PLANNING GUIDE

A hurricane doesn't have to spell disaster for your boat, but it could if you don't have a plan in place when the storm watch turns to a warning.

Hurricanes begin as tropical disturbances or depressions over the warm waters of the Atlantic near the equator, often off the western coast of Africa, gathering force as they move westwards by pulling moisture from the surface of the ocean. Storms move across the Atlantic's tropical zone toward the southeast coast of the United States.

Along with high winds, hurricanes also bring torrential rain and storm surges, arguably the most dangerous part of the hurricane. The combined result of storm surge, wind and rain can be devastating. By the time a storm arrives, help is scarce, so planning well in advance is essential.

The National Hurricane Center will issue a hurricane *watch* 36 hours before a landfall might occur. Hurricane *warnings* are issued 24 hours before a storm is expected to hit. Satellite images of these storms are available at: <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/index.html>

Hurricane Classifications

Hurricane season runs from June 1st through November 30th.

Tropical Depressions – maximum sustained winds of 39 mph.

Tropical Storm – maximum sustained winds between 40-73 mph.

	Pressure	Wind Speed	Storm Surge	Damage
Category 1	>980mb	74-95mph	4-5ft	Minimal
Category 2	965-979mb	96-110mph	6-8ft	Moderate
Category 3	945-964mb	111-130mph	9-12ft	Extensive
Category 4	920-944mb	131-155mph	13-18ft	Extreme
Category 5	919mb	over 155mph	>18ft	Catastrophic

Time and Costs

Preparing a boat as per the guidelines should take in the vicinity of 8 hrs. Costs for the customer in the range of \$400-\$500 seems reasonable including lines, excluding dockage.

Having a 2 man team prepare and restore each boat would cut down the man hours.

Restoring the boat to original condition would take in the vicinity of 4 hrs and a cost of \$250 seems reasonable.

Total hrs per boat: 12 hrs

Total cost per boat: \$650-\$750

Preparation 72 hrs in advance
1. Insurance Cover to be extended before warnings or watches posted.
2. Adequate, reliable dockage to be reserved in advance.
3. Battery bank/s to be charged to full capacity and maintained to this state until shore power removed or final preparations completed.
4. All bilges and sumps to be inspected, dried and clean.
5. All bilge pumps and automatic float switches to be tested, inline filters to be clean.
6. Deck gear to be removed and securely stowed below decks.
7. Pulpit seats to be checked for secure mounting.
8. Secure any loose articles in the interior.
Preparation 48 hrs in advance
1. Move boat to planned location, bow facing predicted wind where possible.
2. Close all seawater intake cocks.
3. Close all sink and head cocks.
4. Seal and cover exhaust outlet.
5. Seal and cover fuel and water tank vents.
6. Transfer important boat documents for safe keeping ashore.
7. Lock wheel in center position.
8. Remove bimini and stow.
9. Lash and secure stainless bimini frame.
10. Remove halyard from main sail head and secure to deck fitting.
11. Lash mainsail in stack pack to boom or remove.
12. Lower boom to lowest position and lash securely.
13. Remove headsail and stow ashore if possible.
14. Tension all lines leading through mast.
15. Remove antennas where possible.
16. Lash and secure tender to davits.
17. Ensure cockpit scuppers are clean.
18. Purchase sufficient new line for mooring and extra lanyards for fenders.
Preparation 24 hrs in advance
1. Secure boat to dock, using new lines as primaries, existing lines to be used as doubles and backups, allowing for vertical movement of boat.
2. Fenders and fender boards to be positioned.
3. Chafe protection to be fitted where needed.
4. Hatches to be closed and in locked position.
Preparation 12 hrs in advance
1. Cross tying across canal, if possible.
2. Position anchors, if possible.
3. Remove shore power, check panel leaving only essential items on.
4. Final check.