

**WHITTAKER POINTE MARINA
SECURING YOUR YACHT
SUGGESTIONS**

1. Each vessel owner is responsible for securing his/her vessel with bow, stern and spring lines in a manner to ensure that his/her vessel, adjacent vessel(s), and the dock and pilings are adequately protected. All dock lines should be in good condition, without excessive wear or chafe, with appropriate chafe protection, and of nylon or equivalent construction. Three-strand nylon line is preferred for dock lines. Depending upon vessel displacement and surface area, dock lines of the following minimum diameters are suggested:

Vessels up to 26 to 30' should utilize 1/2" line

Vessels from 30' to 45' should utilize 5/8" line

Vessels from 46' to 54' should utilize 3/4" line or larger

(Large trawlers/cats/motor yachts with lots of windage should consider 1" lines)

2. Fenders should be used where they can protect the vessel from rubbing against a piling.
3. Dinghies should be removed from the water when the vessel is unattended and stored upside down on the yacht or the dinghy rack.
4. When vessel is unattended the following considerations should be taken:
 - Shut all hull valves
 - Put a warning tag on the engine start that the hull valve is shut
 - Automatic bilge pumps should be on and tested
 - Dog all hatches
 - Double all lines for additional storm protection, using chafe gear
 - Disconnect/turn off shore water pressure
 - Center the boat in the slip
 - Disconnect shore power cable
5. Ensure dock master has current contact information, phone and email. Consider leaving a key to your vessel also.

Hurricane/Tropical Storm, additional preparations

6. Based on the experience of hurricane Irene, **strong consideration should be give to HAULING YOUR BOAT**. With the 9 feet storm surge experienced in hurricane Irene, it is very difficult to properly secure your boat for the change in water level, and line chafe is of paramount concern. As a minimum:
 - Make sure your insurance is current
 - Take down all sails, especially the head sail
 - Take down all canvas, bimini, dodger, etc.
 - Remove dorads and put in the dorad plugs
 - Remove all gear from topside: jerry jugs, wind generator, dinghy, etc.

- Add extra dock lines and chafe protection
- Again, **it is strongly recommended that you haul your boat**
- Make sure your cockpit drains are clear and will remain clear (One boat flooded because the cockpit filled up and over flowed in to the cabin. The drains plugged with leaves and debris.)

7. Additional thoughts and suggestions for storm preparations:

- If you haul your boat, ask the boat yard if they had any problem with boats floating off the jack stands during hurricane Irene. My boat did float off, so that is an important question.
- Make sure you have and maintain good batteries. They should power your bilge pumps for at least 24 hours. We were without power for almost a week after hurricane Irene.
- If you do not remove the sails, you should wrap lines around the mainsail and head sail. Be sure that roller furling gear is secured so that it can't unroll during the storm. This normally requires securing the roller drum as well as wrapping additional line around the sail. Dodger and bimini frames should be collapsed and wrapped when you leave the boat during the storm season.
- Make sure that the cleats or other attachment points on the boat are of sufficient size for the lines. Make sure that cleats have backing plates (we have seen the bolts pull through the fiberglass).
- You will be rigging extra lines as part of storm preparation and will need secure places to tie them on the boat.
- Have a full compliment of lines in place.
- Spring lines fore and aft should be used to hold the boat in position in the slip. Bow and stern lines should be used to position the boat side to side in the slip. They need to be as long as possible to allow for the greatest rise and fall of water.
- The maximum rise and fall of the water level outside of storm season is about 2 to 3 feet. In 2011, Irene reached 9 feet above normal water levels in Oriental.
- Use these water levels as a guide to the length of spring lines and dock lines needed during storm conditions. If you run a spring line from the bow of your boat to the aft piling and tie it about 4 feet above the normal water line, this should allow normal changes in water level. You should have a similar spring line from the stern of the boat to a piling at the bow.
- Bow and stern lines should also be tied to pilings about 4 feet above the normal water line. Higher will not necessarily be better. When we are on the east and southeast sides of a storm (storm goes to the east or north of us), the water will be blown out of the creek and it normally goes out very fast when pushed by 80 mph winds. Your lines have to account for low water as well as high water. The good thing is that it can only go about 6 feet below normal in any case. Then the boat is in the mud.
- Add lines to double the spring, bow and stern lines. Remember line strength is not the only thing to consider. Line chafe is equally important. Two lines give you twice the chafe resistance. Please don't double a line by taking the free end and running it out to the piling. You need two complete lines to get the full benefit.
- You should never use a single line for two purposes! For instance, do not secure the middle of a line to a cleat and then run it both fore and aft from that cleat as a spring line. This kind of line is very hard to adjust under storm conditions. When the wind is blowing hard and the rain is horizontal, it is very difficult to figure out creative line arrangements. Keep it simple. One line with one securing point at each end, and one knot at each end is the best approach.

- Keep the adjustable end of your dock lines on the pier and use easily handled knots.
- Use chafe protection on your lines where they go around the pilings and attach to the boat. One of the boats broke free and sunk during Irene because a line parted due to chafe.
- Once the water level goes above the docks, or way down, it is hard and dangerous to climb on the boats and this will not be done. Please insure that any adjustment length you have on your lines is on the piers so we can tend your boat without leaving the pier. Leave only enough extra line on the pier to handle the rise in water. For instance; if you are in a slip bow first, leave enough extra bow line to reach your tie off point for the bow lines plus about 12 feet for rising water. Take the rest of the line on board and secure it. When adjusting lines in high water it is very difficult to work with long lines. Do not repeatedly wrap the line around the dock cleat! Use several wraps and tie it off.
- The easiest knot to work with on a piling is the double round turn with two half hitches. To tie the knot, wrap the line twice completely around the piling, and then tie two half hitches around the standing part of the line. Clove hitches can be very difficult to untie when under strain.
- When using a cleat to secure a line, make a single wrap around the piling, and then make sure the line runs to the cleat base without being fouled. Then tie it off to the cleat with a single cleat knot and coil any excess line down beside the cleat on the pier. To tie the cleat knot, pass the line under the first horn, along the base, under the second horn, then cross over the top and back under the first horn, finally cross over the top and tie a half hitch around the second horn. Looking at the cleat from the top, you should see one line crossing over two (a figure 8 pattern). Please don't tie extra knots on the cleat or wrap the excess line around the cleat.
- I know most of you are saying, "Why is this turkey telling me what I already know?" Just chalk it up to being on the safe side.
- **Once again, if hurricane force winds are forecasted, the best policy is to HAUL YOUR BOAT.**