

Safety Report October 2009

Storm Preparations – RNYC

This is meant to be a general guide to help you prepare for a wind storm such as those that blow through Newfoundland from time to time. These storms are not always tropical in nature with names, and can occur any time during the boating season. This is just the nature of the local climate. Below is a list of precautions to be followed.

1. Secure your boat with adequate dock lines. This means that they should be doubled up and be of sufficient size. For example, for a 30 foot boat, use at least ½' or 9/16". For a 40 foot boat, use 5/8" or ¾'. The lines should be nylon as this will allow 5% to 10% stretch and reduce shock loads on cleats. Please do not use polypropylene. This material is unsuitable because of its inability to handle chafe and UV. When it fails it explodes and has much less strength for its diameter than nylon.
2. Use chafe protection wherever a rope passes through a chock or over a rail. Leather is best, but heavy rags are also good. Flexible hose will work, though in extreme cases the hose can melt from the heat generated by constant chafe.
3. Use lines long enough to accommodate a significant tide or storm surge. See attached diagram for the recommended configuration.
4. Ensure that attachment points on the boat are up to the task. Cleats should be of sufficient size and have proper backing plates. When securing a rope to a cleat, use the correct knot as shown. When securing a line to the dock, use a clove hitch finished off with a half hitch. It is recommended that if you are securing a line to the main wharf, run it through the deck boards and around the longitudinal beams underneath, the toe rails could be pulled away from the storm forces.
5. When tying off lines to cleats, make sure that the ropes can be easily adjusted from the boat later if necessary. The cleat hitch will allow for this. On other points a bowline is also a useful knot.
6. Set fenders, but dock lines should be the first line of defense and prevent contact in the first place. If necessary, add additional fenders and secure them to a toe rail or stanchion base on the boat if possible. Do not tie them to life lines.

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7. Remove all canvas from the boat such as dodgers and biminis.
8. Drop the boom and lash mainsail covers. Better yet, remove the sail completely.
9. Remove headsails or at least wrap a spare halyard around a furling headsail to prevent it from unwrapping.
10. Remove or secure any extra deck gear such as BBQ's, radio antennas, dinghies, dorades, side canvas, deck boxes.
11. Ensure all sea cocks are closed and secure all hatches and ports
12. Lash the rudder or wheel to prevent damage to the rudder
13. Ensure that there is sufficient slack in power cords if they are left in service. Do not tie them off to cleats or pilings.
14. Turn off any non critical DC loads such as refrigerators and lights. Shore power could be lost during a storm and your batteries will need to be up for the bilge pump.
15. **DO NOT STAY ON BOARD**
During a storm there will probably be a few brave souls hanging around the club. When venturing out on the wharf to check lines on your or any boat, **please wear a life jacket and go with a buddy.**

Ted Laurentius
Safety Officer

Safety Reminder...

Re: "Proper Mooring Lines" for boats in the Marina..

It was noted that on recently during a strong windstorm, that was actually forecast... there were several boats in their slips only tied on with bow and stern lines, there were no spring lines on these boats to stop surging fore and aft in the slips, potential for damage to both boat and wharf. Also many lines were woefully undersized for the vessels being secured.

We would like to remind members that when leaving boats for any time, however short, the boat must be properly secured with bow lines, stern lines and most importantly Bow and Stern Spring lines of adequate length and strength.

If your boat breaks it's moorings it could cause major damage to your boat and others, be sure you are tied up properly and then check again!!!