



Boating Advisory

10 Safety Tips for Memorial Day Weekend

In recognition of National Safe Boating Week, which culminates with Memorial Day weekend, OC Dana Point Harbor would like to provide 10 boating safety tips.

1. **Wear a life jacket**– Drownings occur each year, and could possibly be avoided by wearing a life jacket.
2. **Choose a designated boat operator**– The U.S. Coast Guard reports that alcohol is the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents. Just as on land, law enforcement officers will stop erratic drivers on the water and test them for BUI (Boating Under the Influence).
3. **Check your fuel level**– Start each boating trip with a full tank of fuel and an adequate oil supply.
4. **Vent your bilge**– Always remember to shut off the engine(s) while fueling and run the blower(s) for the required amount of time to vent all fumes from the bilge areas before starting or restarting inboard engines.
5. **Inspect your bilge**– Make sure to visually inspect the bilge for excess water and ensure that all bilge pumps are in proper working order before leaving the dock. (please utilize bilge pads there as well).
6. **Update your charts**– Make sure you have the latest charts and/or charting software on board, as well as the latest U.S. Coast Guard Local Notice to Mariners information so you will be up to date on changes to your area of cruising.
7. **Check the weather**– Be sure to look at the updated weather forecast before setting off; tide information can also be helpful.
8. **Test your VHF**– A VHF radio is an essential safety tool. Make sure it is in working order before you leave the dock.
9. **File a float plan**– Leave a float plan with details of your planned boating itinerary with a reliable person onshore who can notify the U.S. Coast Guard if you don't return by a designated date/time.
10. **Carry an anchor**– An anchor and an adequate amount of rode are valuable safety tools in case of emergency.

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