

Coyote Point Marina

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Summer Winds in the Spring?

Has anyone noticed how frequent the red pennant flies at the Marina office these days? It seems our normal summer wind pattern has arrived a bit early, and with a vengeance! We have had a consistent string of windy days, including several with stronger than normal velocities. Our anemometer registered a gust of 47 knots on Wednesday May 19.

Along with the strong winds come very heavy chop and large whitecaps. We have had multiple incidents of boaters out in severe weather that exceeds the ability of the boat (less often) or the crew (more often) to manage. There is only so much that we can do with our limited rescue capability, and the Coast Guard base is all the way up at Yerba Buena Island.

Here are some of the water rescue capabilities in the waters surrounding Coyote Point:

- Coyote Point Harbor Patrol: Headed by Yours Truly, we have one 22-foot harbor patrol vessel which is capable of search and rescue, towing, and dewatering, and carries basic first aid equipment. This boat only operates during daylight hours.
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Water Rescue Unit: Based in Foster City, the fire department now maintains 24/7 capability to deploy their two new rescue Jet Skis and one zodiac inflatable. This is the best local solution for shallow water rescue situations. The Coyote Point Harbor Patrol team has been participating in joint training with SMCFD for the last two years.
- San Mateo County Sheriff's Marine Unit: This mostly volunteer organization has two 30-foot boats at Coyote Point that have search, rescue, law enforcement and fire fighting capability. One of the boats also serves a surface support for the Sheriff's dive team. These boats are staffed by the Sheriff's department, but also carry rescue swimmers provided by SMCFD's water rescue unit.

- U.S. Coast Guard: Based at Yerba Buena Island and near Sausalito, they have a robust fleet of rescue resources including Small and Medium Response Boats, 47 foot Motor Life Boats (the ones that can roll over and keep going), and two 87 foot patrol boats. Four red MH-65 Dolphin helicopters are based at SFO. This is the team we look to in any serious situation.

All of these resources can be contacted by calling 911 on your cell phone. The Coast Guard can be contacted on channel 16 or 22A on the VHF radio. Coyote Point Harbor Patrol can be contracted via the marina office or cell numbers 8-5 daily.

So, as the weather warms, the afternoon winds continue, rest assured that there are resources that can help you out of a bad situation. But if you are consistently more cautious than you think is necessary you should never need rescue. Boat safely!

- Mark Bettis. Harbormaster

Lock those Lids!

In the recent high winds, we have had several dock box lids fly open and either break hinges and wires or become completely detached. This is after we walked every dock in the Marina last month and secured every unlocked dock box lid with a piece of wire through the latch. Now we must ask each boater to PLEASE be sure your dock box is either locked or secured with a wire through the latch eye. It's a lot of work to repair these lids, and they are expensive. In some cases, we cannot procure lids that fit and have to replace the entire box. We really appreciate your help in this small detail.

It's also time to check your mooring lines for chafing, and that the tension is such that your boat does not move around too much in the slip or constantly rub against the dock. If you see a vessel that is not properly moored, please report it to the office. Thank you!



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