

OC DanaPointHarbor



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— In 2008, more than two-thirds of all fatal boating accident victims drowned— of those, 90% were not 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 blowers for the required amount of time to vent all fumes from the bilge before restarting.
- 5. **Inspect your bilge** Make sure to visually inspect the bilge for excess water and ensure the bilge pump is in proper working order before leaving the dock.
- 6. **Update your charts** Make sure you have the latest charts on board so you can stay up to date on changes to your area of cruising.
- 7. **Check the weather** Be sure to look at the tide tables and get an updated forecast before setting off.
- 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 time.
- 10. Carry an anchor—An anchor and an adequate amount of rode are valuable safety tools in case of emergency.