

Defender Marine

Hurricane Prep Dockside Checklist

Protect your boat with this step-by-step checklist for in-water hurricane preparation.

Step 1: Prepare Early & Monitor Conditions

- Check the latest NOAA and marina alerts for hurricane warnings.
- Review your marina’s hurricane plan and emergency contacts.
- Photograph your vessel and gear for insurance purposes.
- Stock up early on dock lines, chafe guards, and fenders.
- Test bilge pumps and confirm batteries are charged.



Step 2: Configure Dock Lines for Storm Surge

- Double all dock lines and cross spring lines at wide angles.
- Use extra-long lines with enough slack for surge movement.
- Add chafe guards where lines contact pilings or cleats.
- Secure lines high on pilings to accommodate water rise.
- Install snubbers or compensators to absorb strain.



Step 3: Fendering & Impact Protection

- Place large fenders between your boat and dock or neighboring vessels.
- Add fender boards to protect against pilings.
- Inflate fenders fully and check for cracks or leaks.
- Secure fenders with extra lines or straps.



Step 4: Secure Onboard Systems

- Disconnect shore power and stow cords above flood levels.
- Close all seacocks, vents, and through-hulls.
- Remove or secure portable fuel tanks and propane bottles.
- Check bilge pump operation and float switches.
- Remove electronics and valuables from the cabin.



Step 5: Reduce Windage

- Remove sails, biminis, and canvas covers.
- Stow cushions, coolers, and deck gear below or ashore.
- Secure or remove dinghies and outboards.
- Tie halyards away from masts to prevent chafing.



Step 6: Protect Interior & Documentation

- Seal lockers and hatches with waterproof tape or wrap.
- Store cushions and bedding in dry bags or off the vessel.
- Take detailed, time-stamped photos of interior systems.
- Backup digital copies of insurance and registration documents.



Step 7: After the Storm

- Wait for official clearance before entering the marina.
- Wear protective gear and inspect for fuel leaks or power hazards.
- Document all visible damage before making repairs.
- Test bilge pumps, steering, and electrical systems before restarting engines.



