

SEVERE WEATHER EVENT PREPARATION



WHAT TO EXPECT DURING A STORM

A cyclone is an extreme weather event, but most marinas will experience a storm event of some kind, at some time, with the potential to cause millions of dollars of damage in a short period.

During a storm the most common types of damage comes from:

- Boats hitting each other
- Vessels mooring lines breaking
- High winds damaging covers and clears
- Sails becoming unfurled and tearing
- Unsecured property blowing away
- Broken windows
- Internal flooding
- Damage to electronics
- Damage to motors

Marinas themselves can sustain damage from loose boats that may result in major structural damage to piers and pontoons.

The right preparation can help to minimise damage and reduce unnecessary inconvenience and expense for boat owners and marina operators and time spent fixing damage rather than enjoying the pleasures of boating.

PREPARE OR REPAIR

The choice is either to prepare, or repair. If a vessel sinks it might be a total loss and for those that have spent many years searching for the right boat or growing attached to it, the loss can be devastating. Repairs can take time which means time off the water and missing out on using your vessel. There may also be a cost to the owner for excess associated with the claim.

Assume the worst, prepare for the storm to hit you directly and be prepared for it to arrive quicker than expected.

If a major storm is due to arrive on Wednesday, you can be almost certain that the weather will not be good on Monday and Tuesday.

- Monitor the weather situation using services like the Club Marine App or Bureau of Meteorology website
- Prepare as early as possible
- Expect heavy winds and rainfall both before and after the storm

Use our Severe Weather Preparation Checklist to help prepare for any major weather event.

It will not only help protect your pride and joy, but also minimise any damage to other vessels.

CLUB MARINE APP

Club Marine members can receive Severe Weather Alerts through the Club Marine App. You can download the Club Marine App on the App Store or get it on Google Play™.



SEVERE WEATHER EVENT PREPARATION CHECKLIST

VESSEL LOCATION

- If it is possible and you have time, re-locate the vessel to a safer location
- Move a vessel from a swing mooring into a marina
- Move trailerable boats away from trees and power lines

ROPES

Some ropes have greater stretching ability than others, for example, the stretching qualities of nylon ropes can absorb some of the strain.

- Double the ropes where possible and attach to separate cleats or strong points
- Check the cleats attached to the vessel and jetty
- Add chaff protection to protect against rubbing and rope failure. Can be homemade and applied quickly using canvas, sail tape, garden hoses or old fire hoses

FENDERS

- If you have extras, use them all. Any type of fenders will help protect vessels from hitting the marina or other boats

COVERS

There is a balance between protecting against water ingress and reducing windage. Windage has the potential to cause the most damage by causing the vessel to yaw in the pen resulting in massive impact damage and in some cases putting a hole in the hull and sinking the vessel.

So, in the case of heavy rain:

- Remove covers and clears to reduce wind resistance
- Cockpits can be protected by custom made storm covers
- Cockpits can also be protected by using shrink wrap plastic and tape or use a piece of canvas and tape it down as tightly as possible

In the event of cyclonic conditions however, storm covers should be removed to avoid damage.

DINGHIES & TENDERS

- Apply secondary tie downs if secured on deck
- If practical, deflate and stow in vessel or other location

ELECTRONICS

- Where possible, remove all electronics
- Cover fixed electronics with shrink wrap and tape
- Where possible, remove aerials and antennas

TO FIND OUT MORE



SHORE POWER

Power surges can cause damage to electrical components.

- Fully charge batteries – they will be needed for bilge pumps
- Disconnect from shore power

UN-SECURED ITEMS

One of the simplest things to protect against is loss of or damage caused by flying debris during a storm. Unsecured items on your boat have the potential to cause further damage to your vessel and others around them.

- Remove and pack away fly-bridge cushions
- Remove and pack away deck cushions
- Remove and pack away outdoor furniture
- Clear decks of any loose items

PERISHABLE GOODS

In most severe storms there will be a power blackout. Perishable goods can leak into the vessel damaging carpets and furniture and leaving stains and smells that will linger.

- Remove perishable goods from fridges and freezers
- Don't forget the bait freezer

SAILS

Even rolled up sails add to windage and are very likely to unfurl. If the sail gets loose, it will at the very least be damaged and will also place additional drag on the vessel and ropes holding the vessel and the marina.

- Remove all sails

WATERPROOFING

- Tape windows & hatches using duct tape or shrink wrapping tape
- Close all seacocks (especially the head seacocks)
- Leave any cockpit drain valves open
- Make sure all cockpit drains, gutters and scuppers are clean and unblocked

AFTER THE STORM

-  Provide assistance to patch holes using tarps, shrink wrap and tape to prevent further water ingress through damaged hulls, broken windows etc.
-  Remove any water from the vessel ASAP. Dry using fans, dehumidifiers, open hatches (once rain has stopped) and moisture absorbing products to avoid mould.
-  Check mooring and berthing ropes and cleats for damage. Replace or repair if necessary to avoid breakages later on.
-  Be vigilant for fraudulent assessors and repairers. Do not make any upfront payment of excess without speaking to your insurer first.
-  Have an alternate contact person if you are going to be interstate or overseas during a storm.