

Emergency Preparations for Pacific Northwest Boating

Capt. Margaret Pommert

Illustrative Example Only

Reference materials and additional links at: <https://seattleonthewater.com/>

- **Discussion document only!**
- Not responsible for errors or omissions.
- This is not, cannot be:
 - Complete list for every situation, vessel, crew, equipment, voyage. Create your own!
 - Substitute for hands-on training and practice, competent vessel, equipment, procedure review
- Any equipment named is example only, not a recommendation.

Your crew

Ask:

- Expectations and goals for trip
- ICE information
- Medical/other issues (confidential)
- Safety concerns
- Risk tolerance and requirements

Realistically Assess:

- Expectations, goals align to voyage?
- Competent 1st mate, trailing spouse, passenger, or ??
- Physical or other limitations?
- Able to address/mitigate concerns?
- Able to train prior to departure?

Skills self-assessment (skipper, crew):

- Getting the boat back to a person overboard
- getting a person overboard back on board
- Starting and stopping the engines
- engaging and disengaging the auto help

- putting the boat in and out of gear
- operating the boat under power
- reducing sail
- using the chartplotter GPS
- Navigating to a safe harbor
- find in essential safety equipment quickly
- firefighting on board
- finding and plugging thru hulls and likely sources of leaks
- dewatering with bilge pumps etc
- calling for help using the VHF radio cell phone or sat phone
- Using the VHF radio including digital selective calling

Your Safety Culture

Establish:

- Standing Orders, Watch Orders
- Standard Operating Procedures
- Safe word; 'Captain, I have concern'
- Log book procedures
- Float plan procedures
- _____

Create note cards for:

- Safety briefing
- Safety equipment checklist
- VHF emergency procedures
- Vessel inspection pre-departure
- Responses to various emergencies
- Opening and closing float plan
- _____
- _____
- _____

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Vessel Safety Check:

- [Review USCG Aux Vessel Safety Check form](#)
- Schedule a USCG Aux Safety Check
- _____

Bring safety information onboard:

- Smartphone:
 - I911
 - Weather alerts
 - USCG Rescue Coordination Center info and phone #'s
 - _____
- US Sailing Safety at Sea manual
- MMSI number in VHF Radio
- _____

Create Emergency Binder:

- Crew member ICE info
- USCG Rescue Coordination Center info and phone numbers
- Risk management and crew preparation overview
- Responses to various emergencies
- Cheat notes for navigation and communications equipment
- VHF emergency procedures
- Safety equipment checklist
- Vessel & equipment safety manuals
- Emergency drill schedule/record
- Damage control kit contents
- Marine first aid kit contents
- _____
- _____
- _____

Near VHF radio:

- VHF/DSC emergency procedures, including vessel description, MMSI
- _____

Post, and/or in emergency binder:

- [Emergency station bill for: fire, crew overboard, abandon ship, etc](#)
- Emergency Equipment locator
- _____

Fire safety prep

Get:

- Type B extinguishers per USCG**
- Type A, C, or D extinguishers also?
- Fire blanket for galley?
- Smoke/gas/CO alarms?
- Automatic engine fire system?
- _____

Do:

- ID extinguisher locations
- Periodic extinguisher checks/service
- Locate engine firefighting ports
- Check alarms
- Understand hazards of particular types of extinguishers on board (to electrical systems, CO to humans, etc)
- Plan extinguisher to fire type/location
- Practice firefighting with crew
- [Ensure fire escape routes](#) not blocked
- _____

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Damage Control

Get/make:

- [Damage control bag/bucket?](#)
- [Bilge Pump in a Bucket?](#)

Do:

- Practice flooding response
- Thru-hull diagrams
- Thru-hull plugs near each
- Stay-plug foam plugs
- _____

Abandon Ship

Get/make:

- [Ditch bag?](#)

Marine first aid:

Get/restock:

- First aid supplies
- Crew ICE information (confidential)
- Crew medications (current)
- Seasickness medications
- PPE for COVID etc
- _____

Do:

- Current hands on first aid and CPR training, ideally Pacific NW maritime specific, such as: North Pacific Fishing Vessel Owner's Association Medical Emergencies at Sea training
- _____

Personal Gear bag, recommendations for:

- Foulies, clothing,
- Footwear, hat, gloves
- Personal safety equipment
- Seasick medications
- CoB alarms, lights, whistles, etc
- Lifejacket, leg straps, accessories
- Personal VHF
- Personal EPIRB
- Satellite communicator
- _____
- _____

Lifesling & CoB gear

Inspect/review/repack:

- Lifesling
- Lifting tackle
- SOS Danbuoy
- CoB light
- CoB transponders
- _____

Do:

- Highlight location of lifting tackle
- Lifesling practice, various conditions
- Practice reboarding CoB (2 ways)
- Review "[What Overboard Survivors Want You to Know](#)"
- Review resources below
- _____



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Lifejackets

Get/attach:

- Whistle
- Water activated light
- Transponder?
- Leg straps?
- Knife
- VHF radio?
- Harness/tether?
- _____

Inspect/review/repack:

- Auto inflate armed
- Pull cord accessible
- Periodic pressure test
- Periodic re-arm
- Have re-arm kit
- _____

“Get it home” tool bag

Do:

- Review example lists
- Create boat and voyage specific list
- Source tools
- _____

Boat and location specific crew briefing:

On deck, could include:

- Local knowledge and hazards:
- Kelp/rocks•Logs/deadheads•
- Whales•
- Fog•
- Orientation to on deck equipment, hazards, procedures, etc

Other resources:

- [USCG Vessel Safety Check](#)
- [US Sailing Safety at Sea Safety Equipment Requirements](#)
- [ABYC Standards and technical information reports for small craft](#)
- [BoatUS Website](#)
- [Amsea](#)
- [The Sailing Foundation](#)
- _____

Illustrative example: now go make your own!

