

Safety Note #138

MARINAS AND BOATYARDS: GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS



Many hazards potentially exist in marinas and boatyards, including moving equipment and machinery, wet surfaces, ground obstacles, overhead dangers, open water bodies, flammable liquids, and toxic chemicals. Marinas and boatyards are safe places for visiting or work if you and others are careful and follow prudent safety practices.

This Safety Note provides information about general safety precautions at marinas and boatyards.

General Safety Precautions

- Always be aware of your surroundings. Be alert for and identify potential hazardous conditions.
- Inform marina or boatyard staff of your arrival, planned activities, and departure time.
- It is recommended to bring a partner (or “safety buddy”) whenever you are working near a water body.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment for the weather conditions or the type of task(s) you will be performing.
 - Wear a hat with brim, long sleeve shirt and pants, closed toe shoes with slip resistant soles, and sunscreen during warm and sunny conditions. Watch for objects (such as a boat’s prow) that may be obscured by the hat’s brim.
 - Wear a jacket during cloudy, windy, and cool conditions.
 - Wear eye protection when your work at the dock creates hazards from flying particles. See Safety Note #38 for additional information about eye protection.
 - Protect your hands when attaching modules to the dock or collecting hard-shelled/stinging specimens by wearing gloves suitable for marine use.
 - When venturing onto a dock, walk near the center and watch for prows of boats extending over the dock. If you must step aside to allow others to pass, be watchful of the edge. Always look before moving to be sure you do not trip over objects or fall off the dock.
 - If you must manipulate experimental modules in the water that are attached to the dock, lie perpendicular to the edge, extend most of your body out across the dock and reach over the edge with your arms. This will keep your center of mass safely on the dock.
 - If you must crouch over, lean over, or lie along the edge or end of a dock to perform work, wear a life vest and whistle, and have a rope ladder and tether, alarm siren, and a personal retriever or life ring on a rope available in the event of an emergency. Bring a “safety buddy” to sound the alarm and provide assistance if you fall into the water.
- Never board, lean on, or place possessions on any boat or its associated equipment (including lines, anchors, dock boxes, and access steps) without permission.
- Always carry and consume an adequate amount of water for the weather conditions and/or tasks to be performed. See Safety Note #20 for additional information about heat stress.
- Bring a first aid kit and cell phone with you when working at a marina or boatyard.
- Keep work areas clean and clear of slip, trip, and fall obstacles.
- When visiting a boatyard, take care to avoid overhead hazards, keeping well clear from travel-lifts, elevated platforms, and dry-docked boats. If your work requires you to come near these hazards for observation, then wear a hard hat.
- At boatyards, or whenever boat maintenance is being performed, watch for sources of dust and fumes, and maintain a safe distance upwind of these sources. If you feel any ill effects from dust or fumes, immediately remove yourself to an atmosphere of fresh air.
- If you are injured at a marina or boatyard, report the injury to your supervisor immediately. As needed, obtain first aid or professional medical care promptly.



Notes: Portions of this Safety Note were developed from information provided by Leigh Johnson, Marine Advisor, San Diego County Cooperative Extension. See Safety Note #139 for additional information about marina and boatyard safety.