

Tie It Down! A Coastal Property Owner's Guide to Preventing Marine Debris

Many coastal property owners have a hurricane plan for their family and home, but **yards, docks, boats, and construction sites** are often forgotten or overlooked. Unsecured boats, water toys, yard furniture, and construction equipment can be damaged - or even blown or washed away - during hurricane events. When unsecured objects enter our waterways, they become **marine debris** - which pollutes the water and harms marine life.

This hurricane season, do your part to help prevent marine debris accumulation in our local waterways. Before and during a hurricane event, monitor local and national news outlets to stay up to date on the storm. Have an evacuation plan and make sure your property will stay safe.



What is marine debris?

Marine debris is any man-made object that is found in our waterways. It can be small, like a tiny piece of a polystyrene dock float, or big, like a large sailboat that broke free of its mooring.

80% of the recovered marine debris following Hurricane Florence was lumber.

How is marine debris removed from our waterways?

After a hurricane or other major storm, local crews come together with flat-bottom boats and ATVs and collect marine debris by hand. Following Hurricane Florence, 60 crew members collected over **3 million pounds of marine storm debris and over 100 abandoned vessels.**

How can I prevent my property from becoming marine debris?

Make sure that you follow all government recommendations and tightly secure all pieces of property. See the back of this flyer for a checklist to follow to make sure that you protect your property and local waterways from storm damage and marine debris.

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Boat:

- ☉ If possible, remove your boat from the water.
- ☉ If leaving your boat in the water, choose a spot on your dock that is protected from wind and waves.
- ☉ Ensure the boat is sufficiently tied down at the bow, stern, and middle.
- ☉ When securing your boat, use long lines and leave slack to prevent damage from wave action.
- ☉ Remove all non-secured items from the boat (including biminis).
- ☉ Add extra fenders if available to protect your boat and dock.
- ☉ Drop an anchor if needed to keep your boat from floating away.
- ☉ Check insurance policy to see if there are specific preparation requirements.
- ☉ More information can be found [here](#).

Yard:

- ☉ Place all non-secured items inside your house or garage.
- ☉ **Commonly forgotten items: trash cans, bird feeders, lounge chair cushions, and outdoor decorations.**
- ☉ Secure all objects that you cannot bring inside, such as heavy lawn furniture.

Construction site:

- ☉ Remove all equipment possible, including dumpsters and portable restrooms.
- ☉ Take a detailed inventory of all remaining equipment and supplies.
- ☉ Secure all objects that were not removed.
- ☉ Lumber should be tied together then secured to an immobile object, such as a piling.
- ☉ Take care to remove or secure any chemicals that may pollute the waterway if spilled.
- ☉ Evaluate the risk of wind damage to cranes and remove them if necessary.
- ☉ If needed, seal the building to prevent water and wind damage.
- ☉ Make a plan for water removal following the storm.

Dock:

- ☉ Inspect your dock and make sure it is securely attached to pilings. Repair and secure as needed prior to storm arrival.
- ☉ Tie down or remove all unused fenders.
- ☉ Close and lock all dock boxes.
- ☉ Remove all non-secured items from the dock (such as lounge chairs and coolers).
- ☉ Consider helix anchors and tie downs in high energy sites.