

Whittier Boat Rental

Boaters Handbook

*Guidelines in this handbook may not be appropriate in all situations.
You must use your best judgement in any situation.*

Contact Information

Whittier Boat Rental Telephone Numbers:

Main Number - (907) 232-2783

Cell Phone Numbers if you need to reach us right away.

Matt (907) 440-9510

Meagan (907) 440-8840

Whittier Harbor (907) 472-2330

Whittier Harbor monitors VHF Channel 68 .

Whittier Police (907) 472-2340

Note -VHF radio contact to Whittier is limited to about 10 miles out of Whittier.

You can reach “US Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Anchorage” almost anywhere in Prince William Sound.

The CG monitors hailing and distress channel VHF 16, as well as VHF 22.

Typically, you will hail on channel 16 and switch to working channel 22.

Weather

Weather forecasts are generally updated at 4 a.m. and 4 p.m. and are available on the weather channel on your VHF radio by hitting the WX and turning to the station for the area you are in.

Boating Tip

VHF channel 16 is for distress and hailing channel only. To contact us on VHF 16, the proper wording is to name the station you are calling first, followed by your station name last. “Whittier Boat Rental, Whittier Boat Rental, *Meagan Anne* (or whatever boat you are on)”. If you get a reply you or the other person should direct the other party to a working channel. Potential working channels to use are – 14, 69, 71 and 79.

Nothing says VHF rookie like CB talk. Don’t talk like a trucker. “Roger, wilco, comeback, got your ears on, 10-4, etc.” followed by “over and out” are not acceptable on the VHF. Other boaters will think you are an idiot.

When you’ve completed your conversation, simply say “out”.

Returning to Port

All vessels must return no later than 6pm. Late returns may incur a fee. The latest time for return is 7 p.m. to allow re-fueling. No late fees are charged when arrival is delayed due to weather – don't endanger people or equipment to make it back on time.

When returning, please contact us as far out as possible with your estimated time of arrival. If there is space available, you may pull into the Shoreside Petroleum Dock. We will meet you there and proceed with fueling. Care must be taken not to take up valuable space at the dock, and to expedite the process when the dock is busy.

Passengers should offload before fueling begins. If available, a WBR representative will meet you at the fuel dock and fuel the boat for you. You are responsible for payment and for spill prevention at the fuel dock.

After fueling, we will trailer the boat back to our lot for damage inspection. You have the option of cleaning the boat yourselves or we will clean the boat for a fee ranging from \$30-\$40.

Operational Limits/Restricted Areas/Boating Courtesy

You are responsible for operating your vessel in a safe, courteous, and legal manner. Rules of the road must be adhered to and dangerous maneuvers such as close passing, or waking kayakers, etc. must be avoided.

Whittier Harbor is a No Wake Zone area. Slow down to idle/near idle at least 300 yards out so your wake doesn't follow you into the harbor.

Minimize your wake when in narrow passages, or when in the vicinity of kayakers or other vessels. Note- If you slow down partially and your bow is high your wake will be bigger than staying on step.

YOU are responsible for your wake and what it does.

Hidden Bay on the northeast side of Culross Island, Jonah Bay in Unakwik Inlet and the back lagoon of Ewan Bay are off limits to rental boats. Use extreme caution in Culross Passage and in any area you are not familiar with. When entering Culrose Passage from the north about 1 mile into the passage are 3 passage ways – use only the western passage. The area around Crafton Island has many rock hazards – slow down. Your GPS has most, *but not all*, of the rocks charted. An asterisk on the GPS indicates a rock awash, which means it shows at the lower part of tides. It also means it is just under the surface at times. **Not all rocks are charted.**

Rental boats are restricted beyond the following areas unless you have specific authority from Matt to travel beyond these limits. The Boat Rental Manager cannot authorize going beyond these limits. You must get authority prior to the day of arrival.

Rental boats are forbidden to travel:

Southeast of a line from Middle Pt on Montague Island to Bear Cape on Hinchinbrook.

Northeast of a line drawn from Bear Cape to the southern tip of Glacier Island

Outside (south of a line from Cape Puget to Cape Cleare on Montague Island.

Fuel Management

Fuel consumption varies depending on load, speed and sea conditions. The distances listed below are estimates only, fuel management is your responsibility.

Follow the rule – one third out, one third back, one third reserve.

Below are common fuel consumption rates and approximate fuel tank sizes –

22' *Lucky Strike* – 85 gallon tank. At 4000- 4200 rpm you normally get 3+ miles per gallon which translates into a range of 160 miles with a 1/3 reserve.

24' *Fish Tales*- 80 gallon tank. –

26' *Blue Medicine* – 127 gallon tank. Best efficiency on this boat is between 4000-4400 rpm and at 2 miles per gallon has a range of 200 miles with 1/3 reserve.

28' *Elaine C.*- 150 gallons in two tanks. You will get up to 2+ miles per gallon at 3200 rpms for a range of 200 miles with 1/3 reserve.

33' *Meagan Anne* – 250 gallon tank. This boat provides up to 2 miles per gallon at 2900 rpm's for a range of 220 miles with 1/3 reserve.

Stay under 3000 rpm with this boat.

Do not run these boats wide open. You will be held responsible for damage from running too hard.

If you run out of fuel - unless you are in immediate peril, DO NOT call a Mayday. The first thing to do, if you are near shore is drop your anchor so you don't drift into shore. Next, call Whittier Boat Rental by cell phone if possible. If you don't have cell phone service, call the Coast Guard and explain your situation-

“Coast Guard Valdez, Coast Guard Valdez, this is ____ (name of boat). When they respond they will most likely direct you to turn to Channel 22. After you make contact on Channel 22 explain your situation. Tell them you are not in peril (if that is the case) that you have run out of fuel and ask for assistance – either ask them to put out an assistance broadcast to see if someone will tow you in or provide you with fuel or ask them to contact Whittier Boat Rental for a tow. The Coast Guard will not tow you in when you run out of fuel.

Anchoring

All of our boats have at least 200’ of line (rode) and chain. A good general rule for anchor scope is to put out 3 times the line as the depth (3:1) for day activities (such as fishing or having lunch), 5:1 for overnight, and 7:1 for stormy weather, if possible. For example: if you’re in 40’ of water let out 120’ of line for lunch, and 200’ if staying overnight.

Before you start letting out the anchor and rode start backing slowly. Let out the desired amount of rode and continue backing down until the anchor sets or you reach shallow water and have to try again. Most of the time you should back toward shallower water. Pay attention when backing down so you don’t back into shallow water and hit the bottom. If caught in a storm, you may need to back down so that the bow is pointed into the wind. The anchor may not set every time. It can get clogged with grass or be on hard rock and not bite.

BEWARE OF THE TIDE - Tides in Prince William Sound range up to 20’. Check your tides. If you anchor in 15 feet of water at high tide you may be aground 6 hours later. With 200’ of rode anchoring between 25 and 50 feet is recommended whenever possible.

Anchor Buoys

Some boats are outfitted with anchor buoys. The correct way to use an anchor buoy is have the boat operator drive up to the anchor while another person pulls in the slack line – if you are in 40’ of water and have 150’ of line out 110’ of the line should pull in easy. When the slack line is out and the line is straight down, tie the line off on the forward cleat, and put the ring of the buoy around the line and put the buoy in the water. Carefully, drive away slowly at an angle so the buoy is dragging off to the side of the boat. Do not let the buoy get behind the boat or you will tangle the line in the prop. The buoy should create enough resistance so the anchor will pull up and the shank of the anchor will fall into the ring. Then put the engine in neutral and retrieve the anchor, buoy and rode.

If the anchor is stuck, do not keep increasing power, instead try turning and pulling the anchor from a different direction. Usually with patience and persistence it will pull loose. If for some reason it won’t release, do not leave it tied tight and leave the boat unattended. If the tide is out and comes in, it can pull the boat under.

Please clean the anchor off before bringing it onboard. Lifting it up and down a few times will usually clean off the mud and debris.

Maneuvering in the Harbor

Take great care moving around the harbor and in other close quarters. Expensive damage can occur if you collide with a dock or another vessel. Always have at least one person ready with lines and extra fenders. Make sure that lines and fenders are ready before entering the harbor. You are responsible for any damage that you do. Call for help if you need it. We will meet you at the city dock outside the harbor, or at the fuel dock. Whittier Harbor also has personnel that will help you tie up in windy conditions.

Make arrangements with the harbormaster if you plan to remain in the harbor overnight.

BEWARE OF COMMERCIAL FISHING GEAR

Commercial fishing boats are common in Prince William Sound. If you see bow pickers or stern pickers drifting, they are likely fishing and have a floating net out 600 feet or more - slow down, look for corks, and give them a wide margin. Purse seiners will most often have a net attached to both vessel and a skiff. If you run over their net, you probably are going to buy it. A new gillnet runs about \$4000 and they will make you buy one.



VHF Emergency Procedures

1. MAYDAY is the distress signal, and requires the most urgent response. Use Mayday when a person or boat is threatened by **grave or imminent danger and requires assistance.**

PAN-PAN – this signal is used to signal urgent information, such as when a person has fallen overboard and you have lost visual contact.

2. Calling MAYDAY

- A. Turn the radio on and to Channel 16.**
- B. Press the microphone button and slowly and clearly say –**

“Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, this is _____(boat name)_____ (boat name)_____ (boat name). We are at _____(Latitude and Longitude), near _____(landmark). State the nature of the emergency, how many people are onboard, a description of the boat, and your intentions.

If no response, try again. The Coast Guard should answer and direct you from there. If the Coast Guard can't hear you, other boats may answer. Give them as much information as you have time for. Talk slowly so they can hear you.

Emergency Check-off List and Guideline Procedures

Rough weather/water

- 1. Secure all doors and windows**
- 2. Bilges kept dry to prevent loss of stability**
- 3. Passengers seated and evenly distributed.**
- 4. Lash down any loose equipment to prevent objects shifting.**
- 5. All passengers don life preservers.**
- 6. Call the Coast Guard by VHF if assistance is needed or if you think you may need assistance. The Coast Guard can set up a schedule of VHF calls to keep up with your progress to a safe refuge.**

Man Overboard

- 1. Yell man overboard so boat operator is aware.**
- 2. Boat operator – hit MOB button on GPS**
- 3. Throw cushion/life ring overboard as close to the victim as possible. If visibility is restricted throw other items as well such as coolers or other items that will float.**
- 4. Assign lookout to keep the victim in sight at all times.**
- 5. Assign person to retrieve person in water. Person retrieving should don a life preserver. DO NOT jump in the water to save another person unless absolutely necessary.**
- 6. If you lose sight of person in water notify Coast Guard and all vessels in the vicinity on VHF radio by calling “Pan Pan, Pan Pan, Pan Pan, Hello all stations. This is _____(name of boat) at location _____(give latitude and longitude). We have a man overboard and request immediate assistance.”**

7. Continue search until person is located or otherwise directed by Coast Guard.
NOTE – Person in water. Try to swim to the throw cushion and get it on under chest or back to get as much of your torso out of the water as possible. This will make you more visible and you lose body heat up to 25 times faster in the water.

Fire at Sea

1. Air supply to the fire cut off by closing hatches, ports, doors, and ventilators, etc.
2. Portable extinguishers discharged at the base of flames of flammable liquid or grease fires or water applied to fires in combustible solids.
3. Don life jackets.
4. Vessel maneuvered to minimize the effect of wind on the fire.
5. Notify Coast Guard and all vessels in the vicinity by VHF radio of the fire and vessel location. If the fire is not containable call “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, this is ___ (name of vessel). We are on fire at location ___ (give latitude and longitude). State number of people aboard and your intentions- abandoning ship by entering shore dingy or jumping into water etc.

USCG Helicopter Airlift

1. A USCG Helicopter from Cordova provides the fastest response in PWS.
2. During a medivac situation, a rescue diver and a basket will be lowered onboard.
3. The vessel must be steered forward at idle speed so that it is not turned by the helo’s prop wash.

Vessel Sinking

1. Check for leak to determine if leak can be stopped. In holes stuff clothing or whatever is available to slow or stop leak.
2. Don life jackets and stay with the vessel until the last possible moment.
3. Call a Mayday and explain your situation and your intentions
4. Drive the boat onto a nearby beach if possible or as close to shore as possible.
5. Launch the shore dinghy.

Vessel Aground

OK, you hit a rock and the boat is sitting on the rock. DO NOT immediately try to power off the rock. Put on your life jackets.

Check to see if you put a hole in the boat. If you did not put a hole in the boat, check the tides. Is the tide coming in? If so, you will likely float off within a few minutes. Notify the Coast Guard of your situation and that you believe you will be OK when the boat re-floats.

**If the tide is going out- is the back part of the boat floating or aground?
If the back of the boat is afloat, you are not taking on water and can find no holes in the boat, notify the Coast Guard of your situation and intentions. It may be possible to move passengers to the stern of the boat, put the engine in reverse and back off the rock. IF YOU HAVE ANY DOUBTS whether the boat has a hole in it – do not try this, notify the Coast Guard, stay on the boat on the rock and get help.**

Useful Boating Links:

[State of Alaska Boating Handbook with Prince William Sound Supplement](#)

[NOAA Chart viewer chart 16700- PWS](#)

[United States Coast Pilot Number 7](#)

[NOAA Weather for PWS](#)

[Real time NOAA weather buoys in PWS](#)

[Alaska Dept. Fish and Game sport fish regs for PWS](#)

***A Cruising Guide to Prince William Sound* , by Jim and Nancey Lethcoe (this is an outstanding reference-- if you can get your hands on one. If you do, we'll probably buy it from you at the end of your trip.)**

[Fee's Custom Seafoods- vacuum packing and shipping in Whittier](#)

[City of Whittier](#)

[Shoreside Petroleum- Whittier's only source of fuel](#)