



# CHICAGO BOAT OPERATIONS

2025 VERSION

# **HISTORY OF CHICAGO BOATING**

Today, the Chicago Park District operates 10 beautiful harbors situated along Chicago's 14-mile lakeshore constituting the nation's largest municipal harbor system. This system includes ten harbors: Montrose, Belmont, Diversey, DuSable, Monroe, Burnham, 31<sup>st</sup> Street, 59th Street, and Jackson Park inner and outer harbors. These harbors are part of a vast lakefront park system built on lake-fill land. The Chicago Harbor Lock is also the busiest Lock in the United States, with operations 24/7/365. The Chicago River has North, Central, and South Branches, each offering different views of the City of Chicago.

Founded in 1833, the Harbors have long been the primary attraction along Lake Michigan, with spaces for 6,000 boats and drawing thousands of boaters each year. With an occupancy rate in excess of 95%, the harbors are proud to represent the connection between Lake Michigan and the City of Chicago and have long been touted as the city's "best-kept secret".

Each of the ten harbors has its own specific neighborhood feel. Starting in the north, Montrose, Belmont, and Diversey Harbors have been favorites among families for their location near park spaces and easy access. In the heart of the city, you'll find DuSable, Monroe, and Burnham Harbors, which feature stunning skyline views, easy access to downtown, and the world-renowned museum campus. Further south is the nation's newest and greenest harbor, 31st Street Harbor, with spaces for 1000 boats and state-of-the-art amenities. Then in the south, the beautifully located 59th Street and the Jackson Park Harbors have unparalleled charm set in the lagoons of the 1893 Columbian Exposition with beautiful museums and beaches nearby.

## **HISTORY OF BOAT SAFE CHICAGO**

In response to a series of severe boating accidents in 2021 and 2022, a group of US Coast Guard-licensed master Captains and a nurse formed Boat Safe Chicago. Their mission is to enhance boating safety in Chicagoland and beyond by educating boaters.

These accidents, often preventable, were largely attributed to human error, including distracted captains and disoriented crew members.

Boat Safe Chicago has partnered with Chicago Harbors, the National Safe Boating Council, the Sea Tow Foundation, yacht clubs, and charter boat operators to provide safety training and awareness programs. Chicago Harbors has generously offered to use their community room at the 31st Street Harbor and the Museum Shores Yacht Club as venues for these initiatives.

Boat Safe Chicago also partners with the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health to get a box of Narcan on every Chicago boat.

## **Recreational Boating #101**

- 101. How Boats Work
- 102. How Boats Turn & Stop
- 103. Boat Types
- 104. Propulsion Types
- 105. Stand-On / Give-Way (Right-of-Way) Introduction
- 106. Channel Markers & Buoys
- 107. Leaving a dock
- 108. Approaching a dock
- 109. Boating Gear
- 110. Passenger safety
- 111. Boating Customs
  - A. Waving
  - B. Communicating
  - C. Red-Right-Return
  - D. Notification
- 112. Safety Equipment
  - A. PFDs
  - B. Visual Signals
    - USCG Requirements
      - i. Flares
      - ii. Smoke
      - iii. Mirror
      - iv. Dye
      - v. Flag
      - vi. Hand signals
  - C. Audible Signals
    - USCG Requirements
      - i. Electric Horn
      - ii. Air horn
      - iii. Whistle
      - iv. Bell
  - D. Redundancy
  - E. Tether / lanyard
  - F. Fire Extinguisher
- 113. First Responders on the Water

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- 201. Anchoring Basics
- 202. Fueling & Pump-outs  
Chicagoland Fuel Docks
  - Wilmette Harbor
  - Belmont
  - Diversey
  - Burnham
  - 31<sup>st</sup> Street
  - Jackson Park Outer
  - Hammond
- 203. How to take waves and wakes
- 204. Novice Troubleshooting
- 205. Risk analysis for beginners
- 206. Fenders / Bumpers
- 207. Cleats & Lines
- 208. Maritime law
- 209. Environmental Considerations
- 210. Boater Etiquette



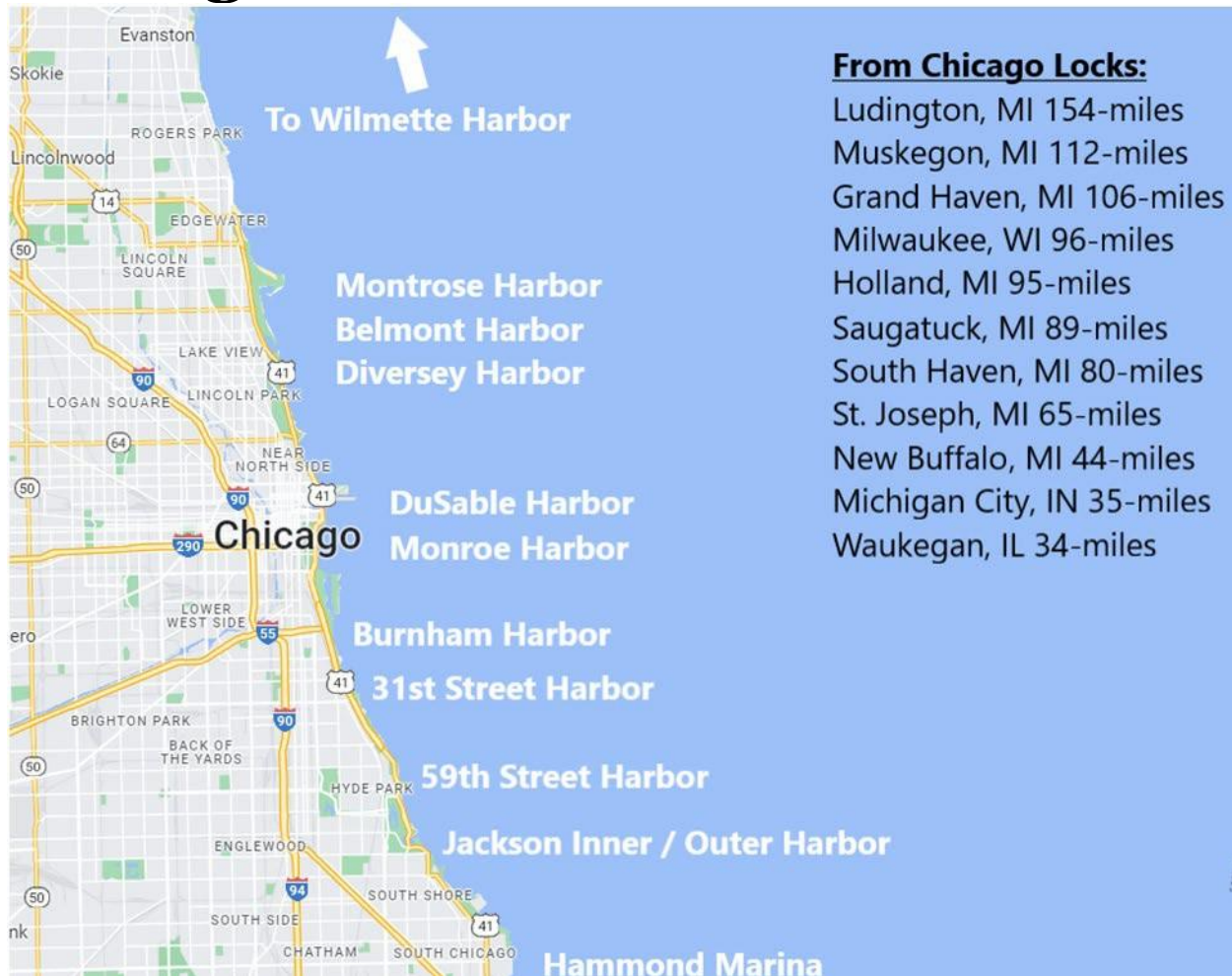
## **Recreational Boating #301**

- 301. VHF Radios
  - A. What is a "Marine VHF Radio"?
  - B. Do I need a license?
  - C. If I have a radio do I have to listen to it all the time?
  - D. How do I operate it?
  - E. Which channels should I use?
  - F. How do I use it?
  - G. An Example of a Non-Emergency Call
  - H. What about in an emergency situation like mayday?
  - I. An Example of a Mayday Call
  - J. PAN-PAN
  - K. SECURITAY
  - L. Digital Selective Calling (DSC)
  - M. What do you do if you hear a distress call?
  - N. How do I know if there are storm warnings?
  - O. Radio Check
  - P. Recommendations and Warnings
- 302. Marine Navigation Systems
- 303. Chart Reading
- 304. Weather Planning
- 305. Tubing / Skiing Basics & Requirements
- 306. Engine Trimming / Trim Tabs
- 307. "Gear Bag"
- 308. Float Plan Basics
- 309. Emergency Procedures (Recreational)

## **Charter #201**

- 201. Chicago Maritime History & Customs
- 202. Chicago Area Harbors
  - A. Hammond Marina
  - B. Calumet Park
  - C. Jackson Park Outer
  - D. Jackson Park Inner
  - E. 59<sup>th</sup> Street Harbor
  - F. 31<sup>st</sup> Street Harbor
  - G. Burnham Harbor
  - H. Monroe Harbor
  - I. DuSable Harbor
  - J. Diversey Harbor
  - K. Belmont Harbor
  - L. Montrose Harbor
  - M. Wilmette Harbor
- 203. Lock Operations (daytime)
- 204. Restricted Areas in Harbors, Lake Michigan, and on the River
- 205. Safe "Playpen" Anchoring & Swimming.
- 206. Safe "Monroe Crib" Anchoring & Swimming
- 207. Chicago River Operations and Practices
- 208. Chicago River Dock-n-Dine locations and customs
- 209. Danger areas on the River
- 210. Boating with commercial traffic
- 211. Dockside Vessel Safety Briefing

# Chicagoland Harbors and Marinas



## From Chicago Locks:

Ludington, MI 154-miles  
Muskegon, MI 112-miles  
Grand Haven, MI 106-miles  
Milwaukee, WI 96-miles  
Holland, MI 95-miles  
Saugatuck, MI 89-miles  
South Haven, MI 80-miles  
St. Joseph, MI 65-miles  
New Buffalo, MI 44-miles  
Michigan City, IN 35-miles  
Waukegan, IL 34-miles

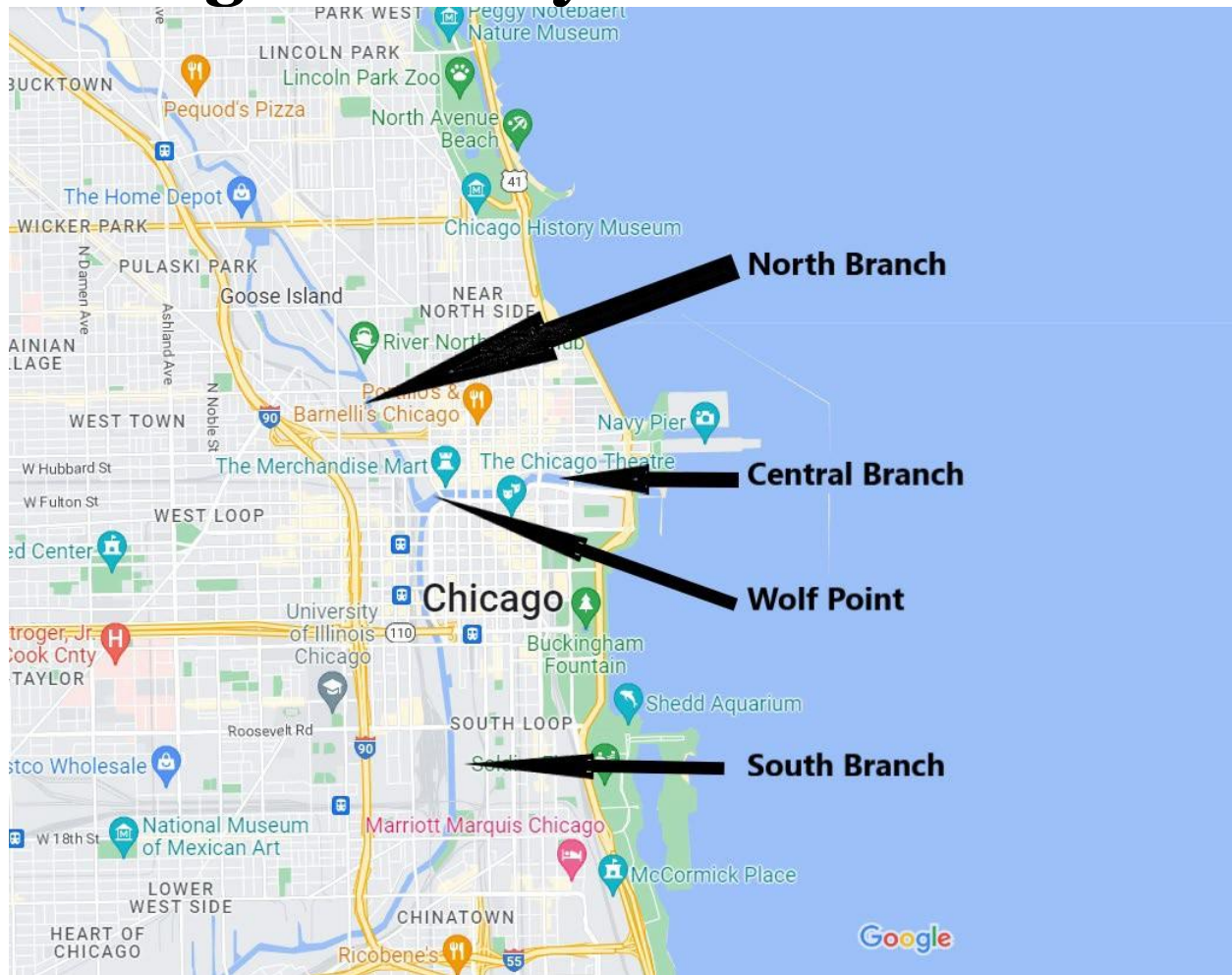
## **Fuel:**

Belmont Harbor  
Diversey Harbor  
Burnham Harbor  
31<sup>st</sup> Street Harbor  
Jackson Park Outer

## **Food / Drinks:**

Montrose Harbor (Park Vendors)  
DuSable Harbor (Food Vendors)  
Monroe Harbor (15-minute Courtesy Dock)  
Burnham (Dock & Dine @ Boat Drinks)  
31<sup>st</sup> Street Harbor

# Chicago River System

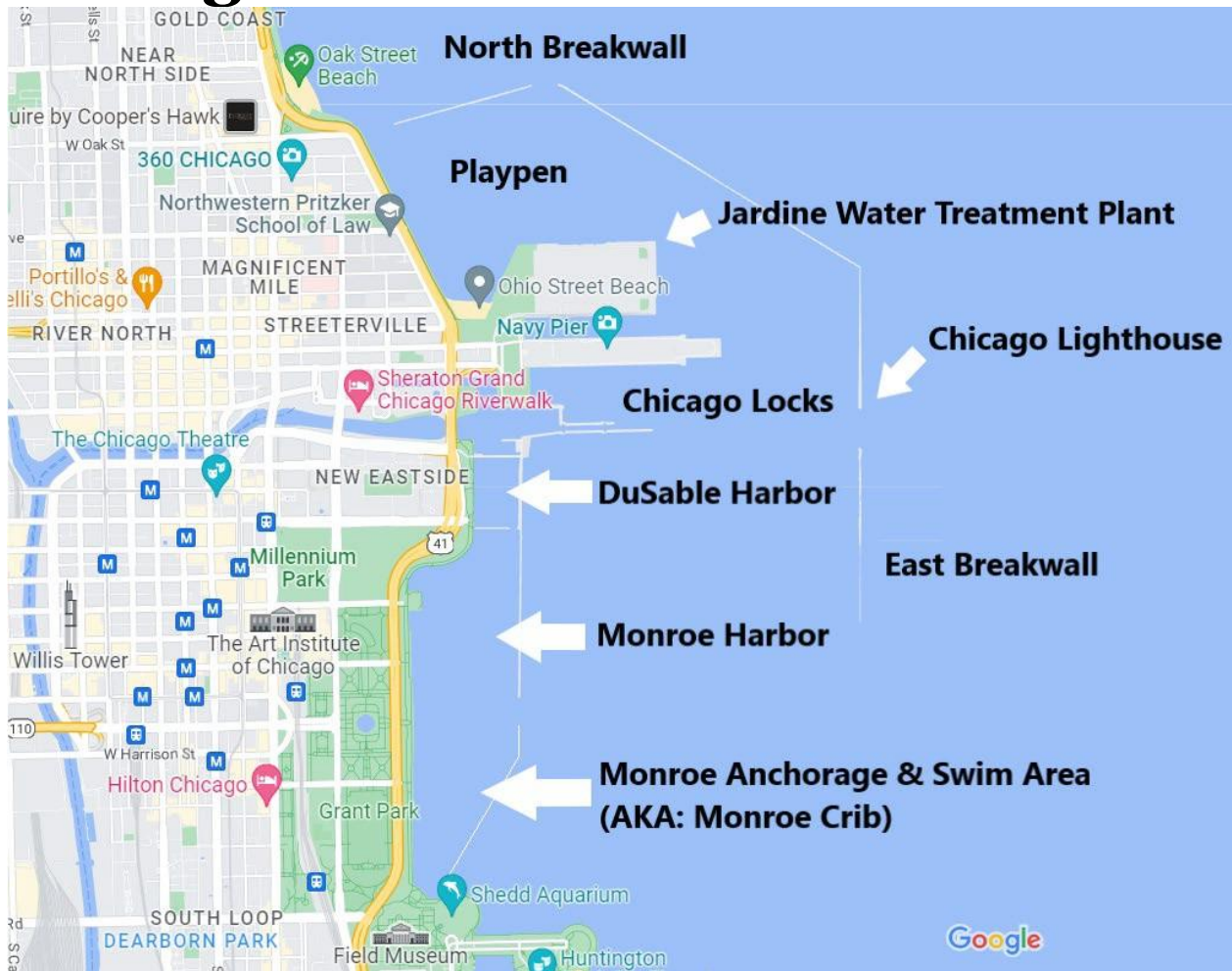


## Chicago River Food and Drinks:

- Odgen Slip (Target, 7-Eleven, Robert's Pizza, Starbucks, Carson's Ribs)
- City Winery
- Tiny Tap
- Riverwalk Food Vendors
- Casa Azul
- The Salt Shed
- Metropolitan Brewing
- Lawrence's Fish & Shrimp



# Chicago Central Lakefront



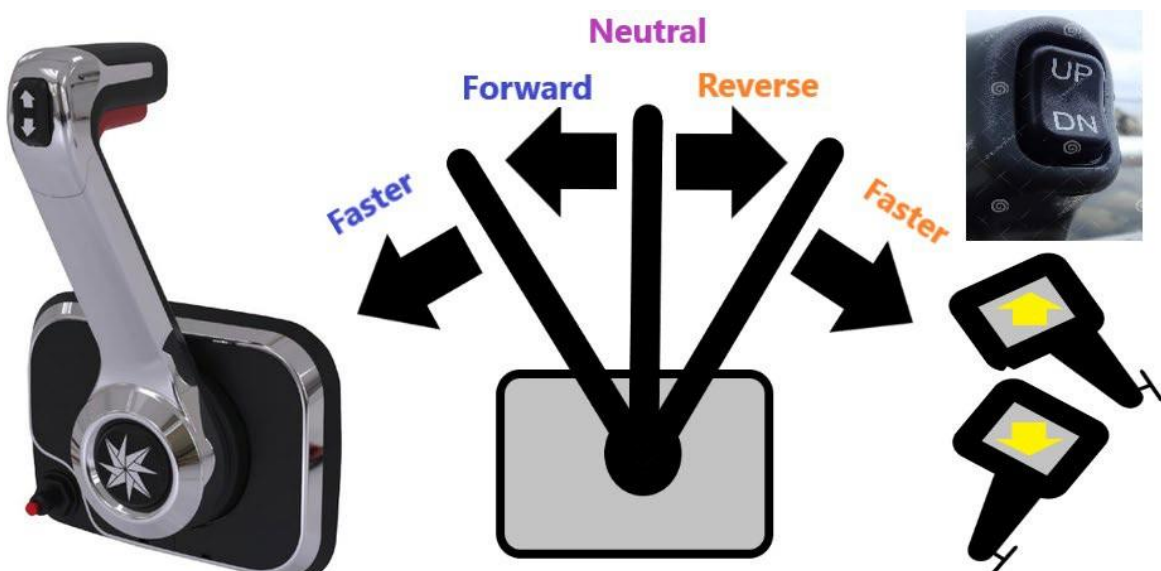
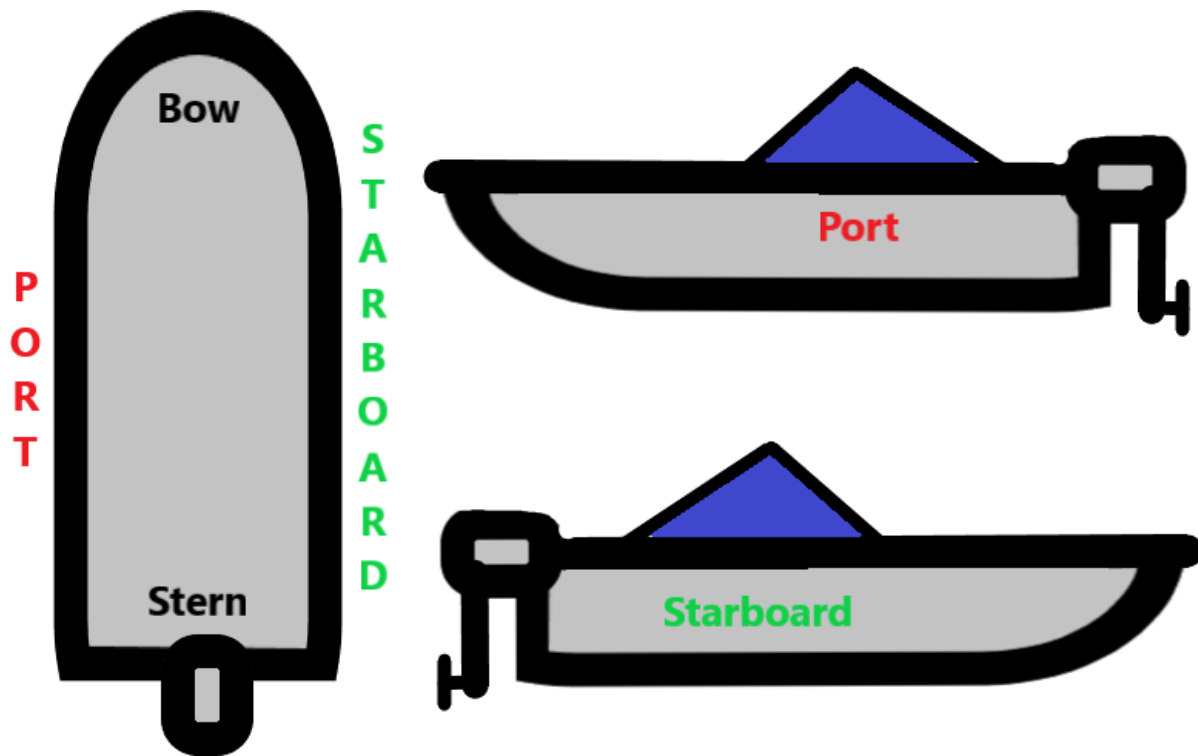
## Chicago Playpen



## Basic Boating Fundamentals:

### 101. How Boats Work

- A. How Boats Float
- B. Bow, Stern, Port, Starboard
- C. Understanding the Helm & Controls

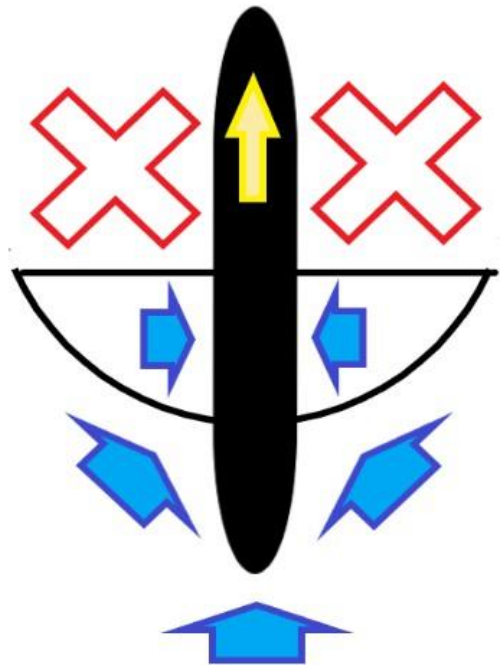
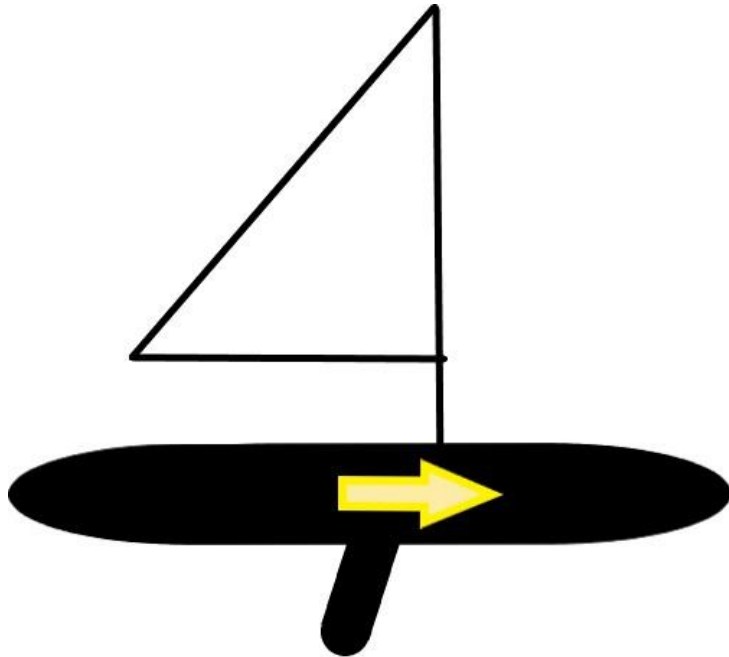


102. How Boats Turn & Stop

- A. Single Engine turns
- B. Prop Walk
- C. Reversing
- D. Stopping
- E. Bleeding momentum

103. Different Types of Boats

- A. Sail
  - Mono Hull
  - Catamaran
  - When is a sailboat not a sailboat?
  - Maneuverability of sailboats



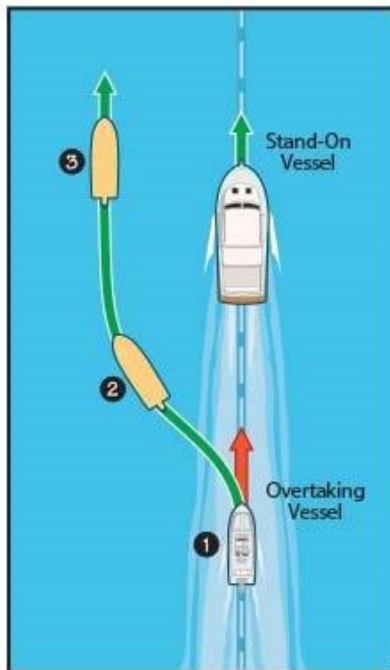
- B. Power
  - i. Center Console
  - ii. Cruiser
  - iii. Pontoon
  - iv. Fishing
  - v. Go-Fast
  - vi. Yacht

104. Different Types of Propulsion

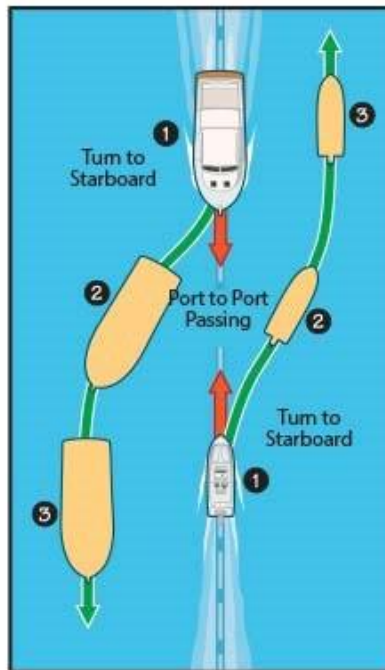
- A. Gas
- B. Sail
- C. Electric
- D. Manual

105. Stand-On / Give-Way (Right-of-Way) Introduction

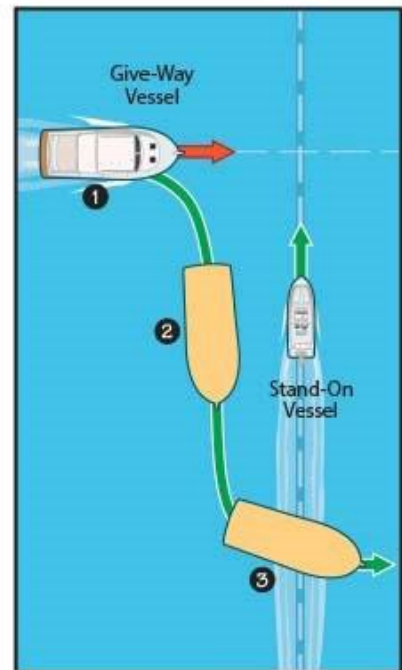
- A. Stand-On & Give-Way
- B. Safe Navigation
- C. Captain's Rights and Responsibilities
- D. Basic Accident Avoidance



1. OVERTAKING



2. HEAD-ON SITUATION



3. CROSSING SITUATION

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

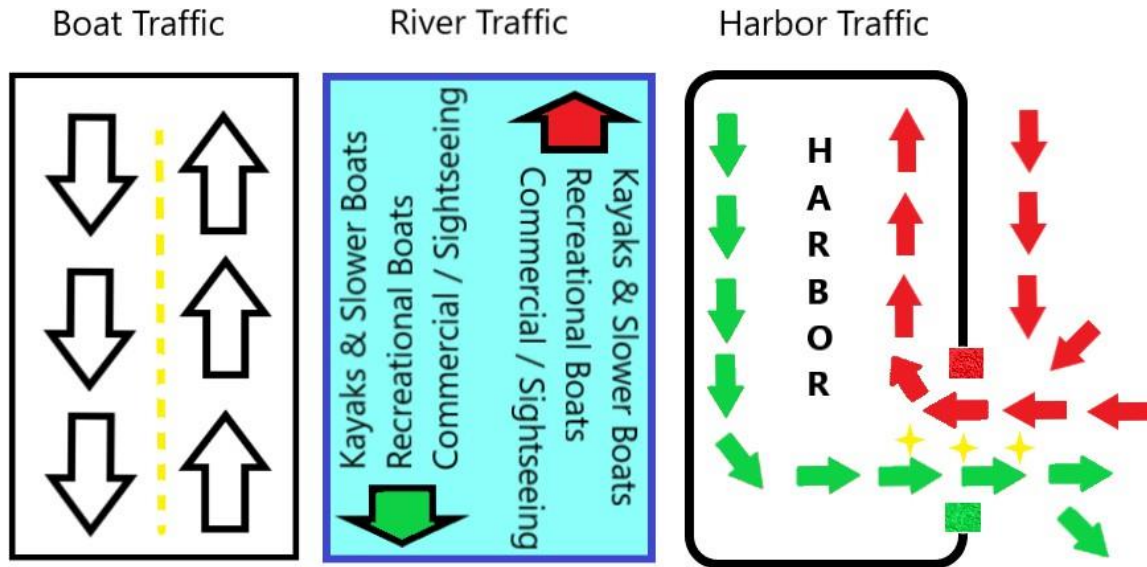
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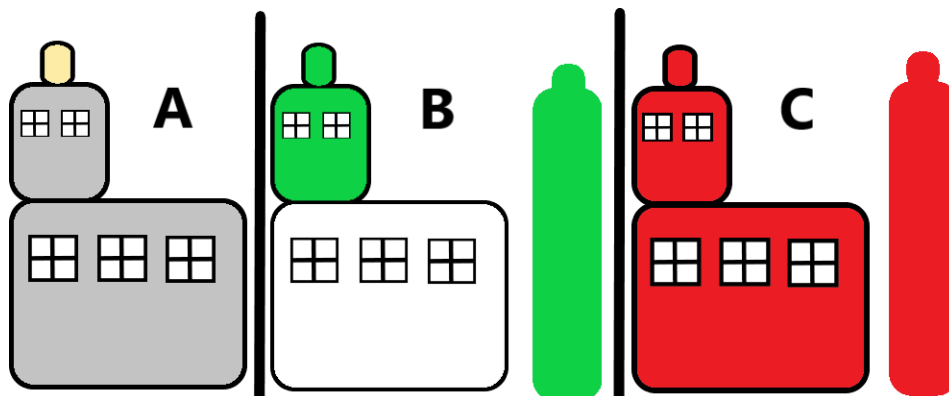
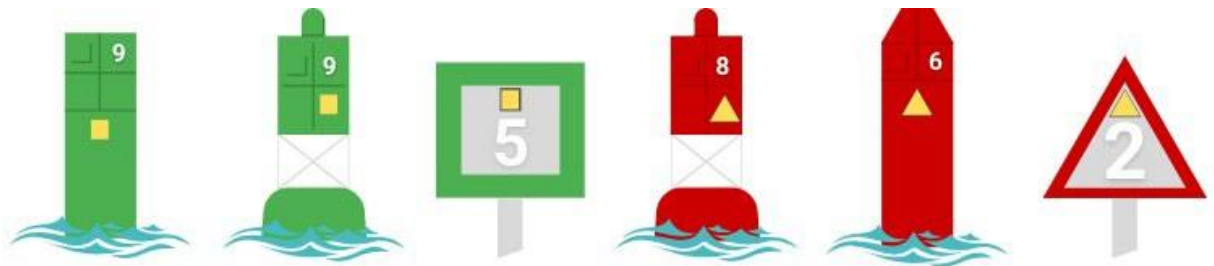
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106. Channel Markers & Buoys

- RENT / COGS
- Lighthouses / Piers
- Restricted Access (Beaches, government, homeland security)
- Restricted Speed (No Wake, Minimum Wake, Safe Operation)







 US Army Corps of Engineers

### Know the Boating Rules of the Road



 US Army Corps of Engineers

### Diamond Shape

This shape alerts boaters to upcoming hazards. Some will have words in them indicating the danger ahead such as rocks.

### Circle

A circle will indicate restricted operations in a certain stretch of water. This can include restricted speeds or no wake zones.

### Diamond with a Cross

Be careful with this one. It means boats are prohibited. This can be a swimming area or a place boater are not allowed.

### White Ball Buoys

White ball buoys are for mooring in the harbors and assigned by the Harbormaster.

### Green Buoys

Green buoys are very common to see. They indicate the left side of the channel when returning from a large body of water to a smaller body of water.

### Red Buoys

Similar to the green buoys (you will see them together), red buoys indicate the right side of the channel when returning from a large body of water to a smaller body of water.

**Remember: "Red, Right, Return"**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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107. Leaving a Dock
- A. Casting Off
  - B. Warp / Pushing / Pulling
  - C. Stern Prop Walk and Push
  - D. Weather / Conditional Considerations
108. Approaching a Dock
- A. Types of Docks
  - B. Cleats vs. Pilings
  - C. Approach Angle
  - D. Approach Speed
  - E. Proper Line Usage
109. Boating Gear
- A. Life Jackets
  - B. Throwable / Ring
  - C. Hook
  - D. Bumper / Fenders
  - E. Lines
  - F. Anchor(s)
  - G. Foul Weather Gear
110. Passenger Safety
- A. Embarking / Boarding
  - B. Weight Distribution
  - C. Seating Areas
  - D. Danger Areas (Bow, Motor)
  - E. Safety Briefing
  - F. Planning Movements
  - G. Being Assertive with Ballast (Large People)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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111. Boating Customs

- A. Waving
- B. Communicating
- C. Red-Right-Return
- D. Notification

112. Safety Equipment

- A. PFDs
- B. Visual Signals
  - USCG Requirements
    - i. Flares
    - ii. Smoke
    - iii. Mirror
    - iv. Dye
    - v. Flag
    - vi. Hand Signals
- C. Audible Signals
  - USCG Requirements
    - i. Electric Horn
    - ii. Air Horn
    - iii. Whistle
    - iv. Bell
- D. Redundancy
- E. Tether / Lanyard
- F. Fire Extinguisher

113. First Responders on the Water

- A. US Coast Guard
- B. US Coast Guard Auxiliary
- C. Chicago Police
- D. Chicago Fire
- E. Chicago Park District Lifeguards
- F. Chicago Harbors
- G. Illinois DNR
- H. Tow Boat US
- I. Illinois State Police



## **Recreational Boating #201:**

### **201. Anchoring Basics**

- A. Anchor types and uses
- B. How anchors work
- C. 1'x 8' method
- D. Sand / Mud / Rock
- E. Bow into the wind
- F. Swimming considerations
- G. Wake / traffic considerations
- H. Planning ahead of the pack

## **Playpen**



## **Monroe Harbor**

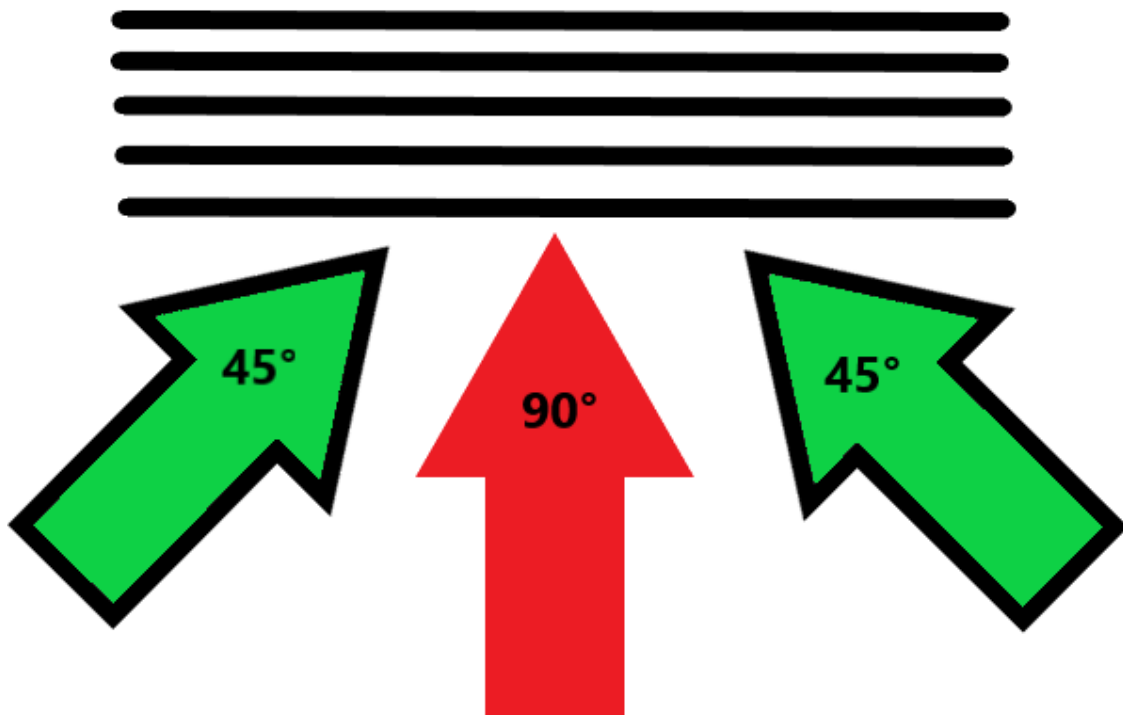


202. Fueling & Pump-outs
- A. Fuel dock operations
  - B. How to contact a fuel dock
  - C. How to approach a fuel dock
  - D. Port / starboard / wind / current
  - E. Fuel keys
  - F. Fuel spill prevention
  - G. Spill containment
  - H. Fuel tank ventilation
  - I. Engine room blowers
  - J. Passenger expectations @ fuel docks
  - K. Holding tanks
  - L. Pumping out tanks
  - M. Pump out spill prevention
  - N. Decontamination

*Fuel is available at Belmont Harbor, Diversey Harbor, Burnham Harbor, 31st Street Harbor, Jackson Harbor*

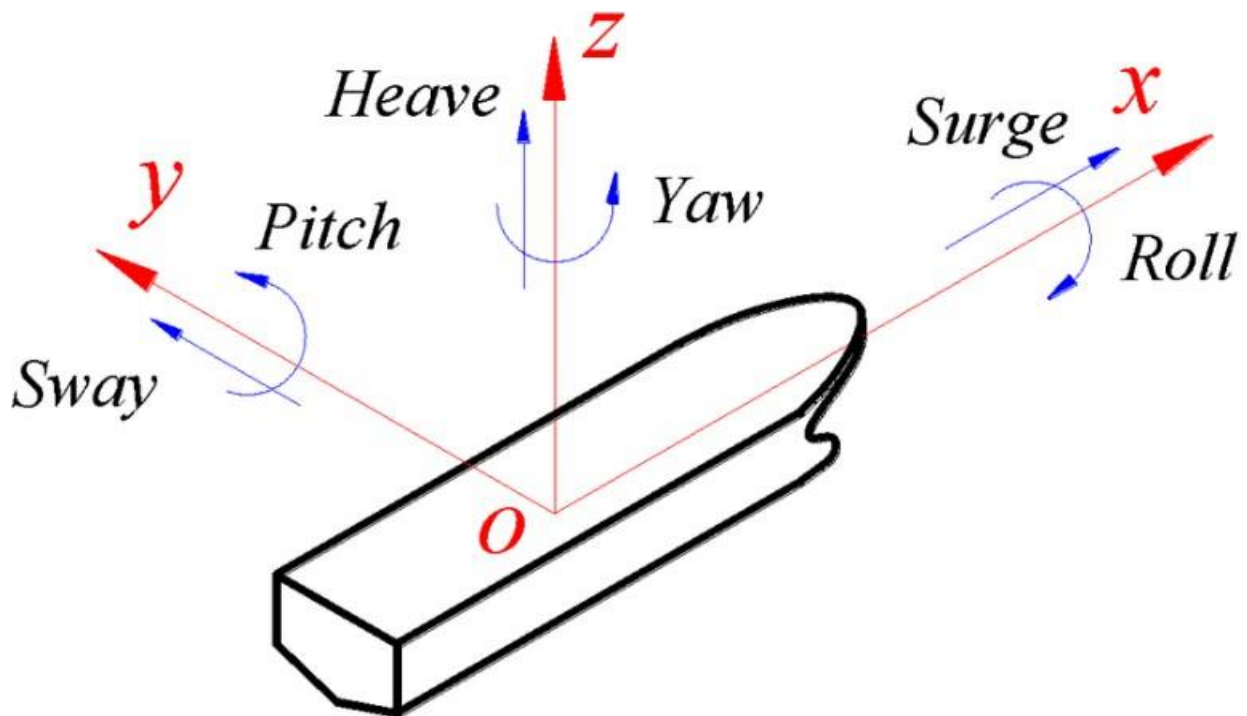
203. How to take waves and wakes
- A. Waves & wind
  - B. Tacking
  - C. Shadowing
  - D. Wakes
  - E. Taking wakes (45°)
  - F. Avoiding wakes
  - G. Passenger notification

**Waves + Waves + Waves + Waves + Waves**



204. Novice Troubleshooting

- A. Weight distribution
- B. Bilge and compartments
- C. Listing
- D. Bow attitude
- E. Engine
- F. Prop / drive
- G. Electrical
- H. Mooring
- I. Docking
- J. Anchoring
- K. Drag

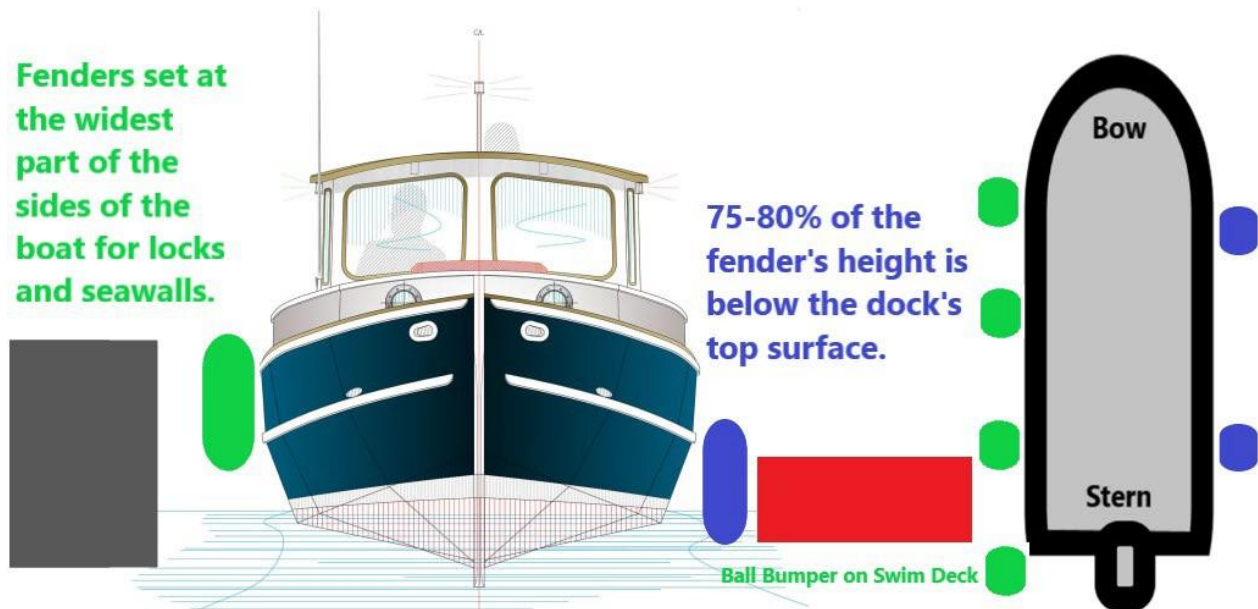


205. Risk analysis for beginners

- A. Is today a good day to boat?
- B. Wind
- C. Waves
- D. Weather forecasts: NOAA
- E. Thunderstorms
- F. Marine traffic
- G. US Coast Guard advisories
- H. Passenger restrictions
- I. Special considerations
- J. Resources for boaters

**206. Fenders / Bumpers**

- A. What is a fender / bumper?
- B. Docks v. locks v. rafting
- C. Proper alignment and positioning



**207. Cleats & Lines**

- A. How to tie off to a cleat
- B. Ropes & lines
- C. Dock lines
- D. Anchor lines
- E. Watersport lines

**208. Think for Your Guests**

- A. Ice / Water
- B. Sunblock / Bug spray
- C. Emergency snacks
- D. Cell phone chargers
- E. Trip planning
- F. Contingencies
- G. City Pics

209. Maritime Law

- A. Federal maritime laws
- B. Federal maritime law enforcement
- C. State law enforcement
- D. Local law enforcement
- E. Voluntary law enforcement
- F. BUI / reckless operation
- G. Liabilities of the captain of a vessel

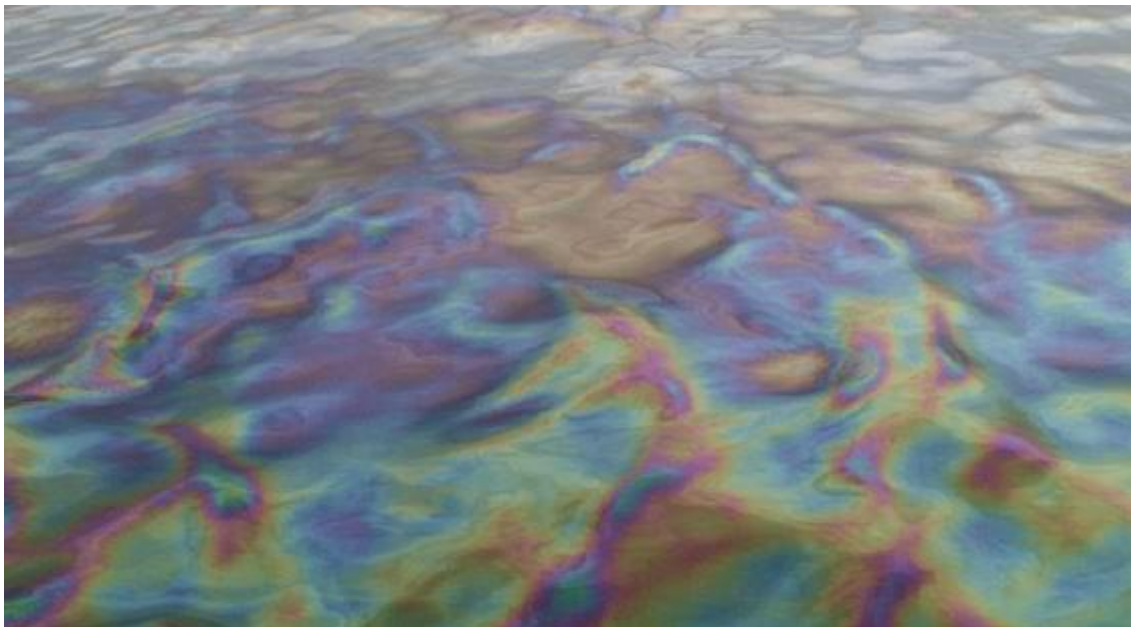


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**B.U.I.**

210. Environmental Considerations

- A. Fuel discharge
- B. Oil discharge
- C. Bilge discharge
- D. Boating in protected areas





211. Boater Etiquette
- A. Following
  - B. Passing
  - C. Signaling
  - D. "All-Stop"
  - E. Docking
  - F. Locking up
  - G. Locking down
  - H. Staging
  - I. Boat ramps
  - J. Fuel docks
  - K. Courtesy docks
  - L. Touch-n-Go
  - M. Anchoring
  - N. PWC(s)
  - O. Chicago River
  - P. Fireworks
  - Q. Air & Water Show



Chicago Maritime Museum  
1200 West 35th Street River Level  
Chicago, IL 60609  
773-376-1982

*Exploring our waterways, our history and our people.*



**MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:**

Unlimited free admission to the museum for the family, Docent-led group tours; support of museum work; development of new exhibits; invitations to previews and member-only special events; free subscription to the monthly e-newsletter, On the Move ten percent discount on all purchases, Opportunities to serve on committees and volunteer for special projects. Support the museum with an annual \$35.00 membership or donate today!

[chicagomaritimemuseum.org](http://chicagomaritimemuseum.org)

## **Recreational Boating #301**

### 301. VHF Radios



#### **A. What is a "Marine VHF Radio"?**

Although not required in recreational boats under 65.5 feet long, a Very High Frequency (VHF) Marine Radio allows instant communication between your boat and other boats, marinas, bridges, and the United States Coast Guard (USCG). It is the primary means of communication on coastal waters and has many characteristics which make it preferable to a cell phone, CB Radio, or other means of communication. Most VHF Marine Radios also have instant access to NOAA weather forecasts 24 hours a day.

#### **B. Do I need a license?**

If you are a recreational boater traveling within the United States, you do not need a license for a VHF Marine Radio for use on a boat. On land, an FCC license is required.

#### **C. If I have a radio, do I have to listen to it all the time?**

If you have the radio on, you must maintain a watch on VHF Channel 16. In USCG District waters, urgent marine information broadcasts, such as storm warnings, are announced on Channel 16. All Chicago based EMS / Police / Fire / Lifeguard / DNR radio communications start on Channel 16.

#### **D. How do I operate a VHF Radio?**

- I. Make sure you are on the correct channel
- II. Adjust "Squelch" control as low as possible without hearing static or "white noise"
- III. Push the button on the microphone to transmit (send)
- IV. Speak in a normal voice
- V. Take your finger OFF the button to hear the other person

#### **E. Which channels should I use?**

- CHANNEL 9: The primary calling channel. (Establish contact on this channel and move to a "working channel" as soon as possible)
- CHANNEL 16: Emergency and distress calls only

- CHANNEL 22A: Restricted to USCG use only. If you establish contact with the USCG on Channel 9 or 16, they may ask you to switch to Channel 22A. You may also hear an announcement on Channel 16 to switch to Channel 22A for important information.
- CHANNEL 13: Bridge to Bridge Communications between vessels. Also used to request bridge openings. Ships less than 65ft in length maintain a listening watch on this channel in US waters. This is a good channel to listen to in periods of poor visibility so that you can communicate with ferries, freighters, and other large vessels. (You must use the low power on your radio when broadcasting on Channel 13)
- CHANNEL 14: Used to contact Chicago, Tom J O'Brien, or Lockport Lockmasters
- CHANNELS 68, 69, 71, 72, 78A: "Working Channels." The only channels available to non-commercial vessels for ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore communications. Chicago Harbors use several channels.

#### **F. How do I make a radio call?**

The standard procedure for a non-emergency call on Channel 9, such as calling another vessel, marina, or restaurant to ask where to tie up for dinner, is as follows:

- I. Name of station being called, spoken three times
- II. The words "THIS IS", spoken once
- III. Name of your vessel spoken once
- IV. The word "OVER"
- V. Wait for the station being called to answer. Their answer should be in the same manner as your call.
- VI. Once answered, you should suggest a specific working channel to carry on your conversation
- VII. The word "OVER"
- VIII. Wait for reply or confirmation from the station being called, switch to the working channel and repeat the process
- IX. When done speaking and leaving a specific channel, end with the word "OUT"

#### **G. Example of a Non-Emergency Call**

- Calling Station: "Lobster Cage Marina, Lobster Cage Marina, Lobster Cage Marina, THIS IS the motor vessel Cat Lady. OVER."
- Responding Station: "Cat Lady, Cat Lady, Cat Lady, This is Lobster Cage Marina. OVER."
- Calling Station: "Please switch and listen to Channel 68. OVER."
- Responding Station: "Switching Channel 68, OUT."
- You would then switch to Channel 68 and call Lobster Cage Marina using the same procedure and conduct your business. All conversations whether on a hailing channel or a working channel should be kept short and to the point.

#### **H. What about in an emergency situation like mayday?**

"MAYDAY" is to be used ONLY in an emergency in which the boat and/or persons on board are in imminent danger of sinking or major injury or death. You may only have seconds to send a distress call. Here's what you do. Transmit in this order:

- I. Tune your radio to Channel 16
- II. Distress signal "MAYDAY"-spoken three times
- III. The words "THIS IS", spoken once
- IV. Name of vessel in distress -spoken three times



- V. Give position of vessel by latitude or longitude or by bearing (true or magnetic, state which) and distance to a well-known landmark such as a navigational aid or small island, or in any terms which will assist a responding station in locating the vessel in distress. Include any information on vessel movement such as course, speed and destination.
- VI. Provide nature of distress (sinking, fire etc.)
- VII. Indicate number of persons onboard
- VIII. Provide type of assistance desired
- IX. Provide any other information which might facilitate rescue, such as length or tonnage of vessel, number of persons needing medical attention, color hull, cabin, masts, etc.
- X. The word "OVER"
- XI. Stay by the radio if possible. Even after the message has been received, the USCG can find you more quickly if you can transmit a signal on which a rescue boat or aircraft can home in on.

#### **I. Example of a Mayday Call**

*"MAYDAY - MAYDAY - MAYDAY - THIS IS BLUE DUCK - BLUE DUCK - BLUE DUCK - CAPE HENRY LIGHT BEARS 185 DEGREES MAGNETIC - DISTANCE 2 MILES STRUCK SUBMERGED OBJECT NEED PUMPS - MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND TOW. THREE ADULTS, TWO CHILDREN ONBOARD. ONE PERSON COMPOUND FRACTURE OF ARM. ESTIMATE CAN REMAIN AFLOAT TWO HOURS. THIRTY-TWO FOOT CABIN CRUISER - WHITE HULL - BLUE DECK HOUSE OVER".*

Repeat at intervals until an answer is received.

#### **J. PAN-PAN**

For a potentially dangerous situation, which may or may not end up in a "MAYDAY", use "PAN-PAN, PAN-PAN, PAN-PAN" (pronounced pahn pahn). It is used when the safety of a vessel or person is in jeopardy.

#### **K. SECURITAY**

For important announcements that you want others to pay attention to, say "SECURITAY" (the French pronunciation of "Security"). For example, use Securitay to report a submerged log in a particular vicinity. Avoid using cellular phones for Secuirtay!

#### **L. Digital Selective Calling (DSC)**

All new radios, and some older ones, have DSC capability. DSC radios are VHF radios, but they have an added benefit of sending an automatic DISTRESS alert (on Channel 70) to the USCG and other nearby DSC and VHF equipped vessels when activated. (Read your manual for specific features of your model.) To take full advantage of the DSC, be sure to obtain a free nine-digit Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number and have it programmed into the unit before you transmit. You may obtain a free MMSI by contacting Boat US, SeaTow or the US Power Squadrons. Newer DSC capable radios also allow non-emergency facilitated boat to boat communications.

#### **M. What do you do if you hear a distress call?**

If you hear a distress message from a vessel and it is not answered, then you must answer. If you are reasonably sure that the distressed vessel is not in your vicinity, you should wait a short time for others to acknowledge first.

**Q. How do I know if there are storm warnings?**

The USCG announces storm warnings and other urgent marine information broadcasts on VHF Channel 16 before making the broadcasts on VHF Channel 22A. (Most VHF's also include the weather channels.)

**R. How do I know if my radio is transmitting? Radio Check!**

You can request a radio check on Channel 9 or another working channel. Not on Channel 16!

**S. Recommendations and Warnings**

- Turn your radio on and listen for a while to hear how other people use it
- Always listen before you transmit to make sure you are not "stepping" on someone
- Use plain English on the VHF. Do not use codes or "CB talk".
- Foul language and false distress signals are illegal. You can be prosecuted for either.
- Limit your conversations to 5 minutes or less. There may be other people who want to use the channel.
- Remember that everything you say can be heard by anyone who has a VHF radio
- If you're speaking to someone who is within a few miles from you, try the LOW POWER button on your radio
- If you issue a MAYDAY call, make sure everyone is wearing a lifejacket

302. Marine Navigation Systems

- A. Navionics/Scuttlebutt/Know Wake
- B. Chart plotters
- C. Phone Apps
- D. Depth & Compass

303. Chart Reading

- A. Chart basics
- B. Chart symbols and legend
- C. Compass Rose
- D. True north v. magnetic north
- E. Plotting a course
- F. Avoiding obstructions and restricted areas
- G. Basic compensation for wind and waves
- H. Alternative route(s)
- I. The "blow-back" considerations

304. Weather Planning

- A. Weather apps
- B. Temperature considerations
- C. Current wind speed / direction
- D. Forecasted wind speed / direction
- E. Current waves conditions
- F. Forecasted wave conditions
- G. Cold fronts
- H. Thunderstorms
- I. Fog
- J. Weather emergency procedures

305. Tubing / Skiing Basics & Requirements

- A. Principles of towing a person
- B. Laws / Regulations of towing
- C. Challenges for the captain
- D. Spotters
- E. Hand signals
- F. Dangers
- G. "Never Do This" list

306. Engine Trimming / Trim Tabs

307. Gear Bag

- A. Types of bags
- B. First aid kit
- C. Tools
- D. Accessories
- E. Lighting
- F. Binoculars
- G. "Go" items:
  - Sunblock / bug spray / Dramamine / bands
  - Emergency wipes
  - Phone charger(s)
  - Charging brick
  - Foul weather gear

308. Float Plan Basics

- A. Who?
- B. What?
- C. When?
- D. From Where?
- E. Arrival time?
- F. Who Knows?
- G. How Do We Check-in?
- H. What if we are late?
- I. Opening and closing float plans
- J. Contingencies

309. Emergency Procedures (Recreational)

- A. Man overboard
- B. Boat firefighting
- C. Medical triage
- D. Shallow water operations
- E. Beaching the vessel

## Charter #201

201. Chicago Maritime History & Customs

202. Chicago Area Harbors

A. **Hammond Marina**

Obstacles

Fuel Dock 219-473-9907 (VHF-9/16)

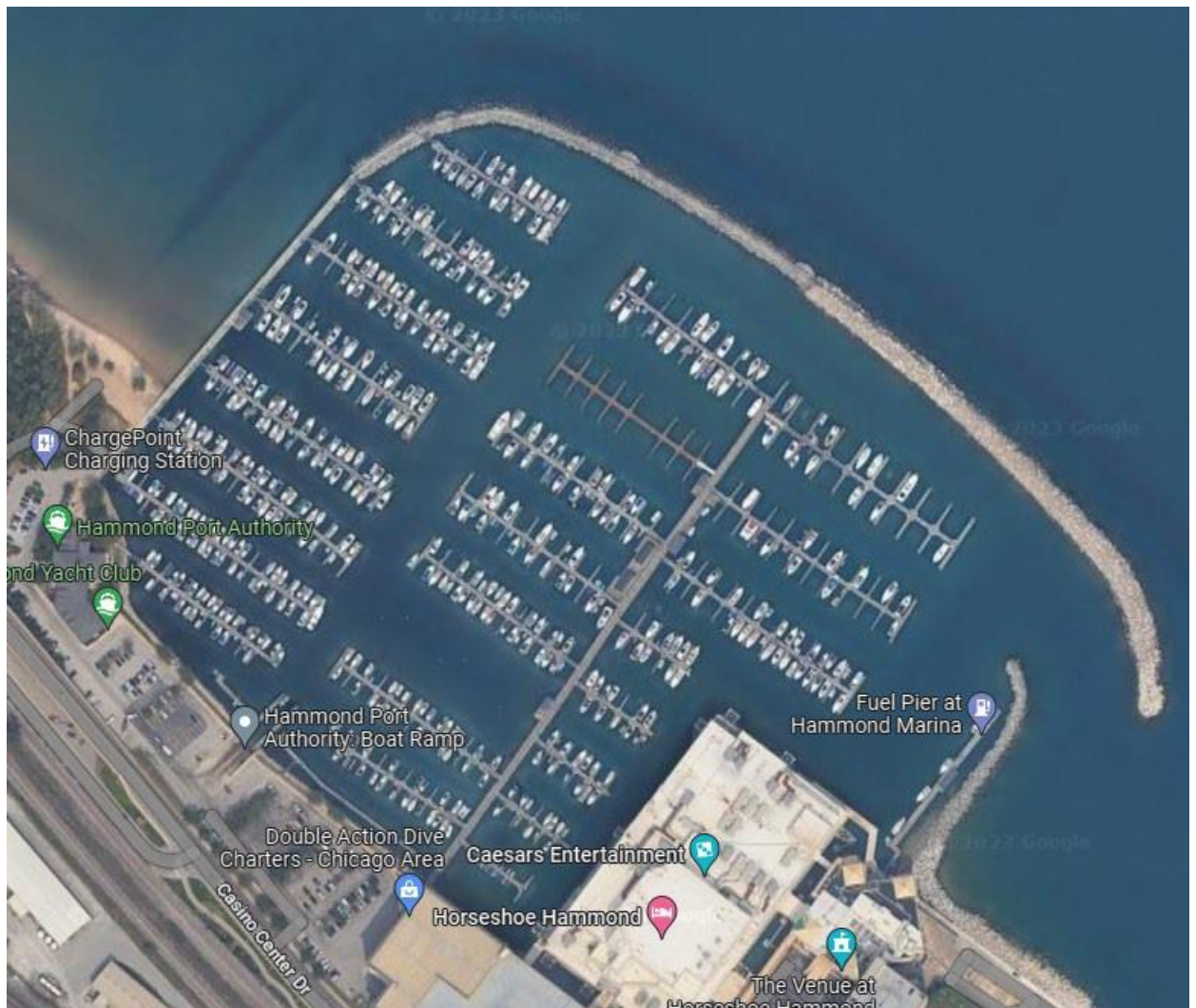
Ship Store 219-659-7678 (VHF-9/16)

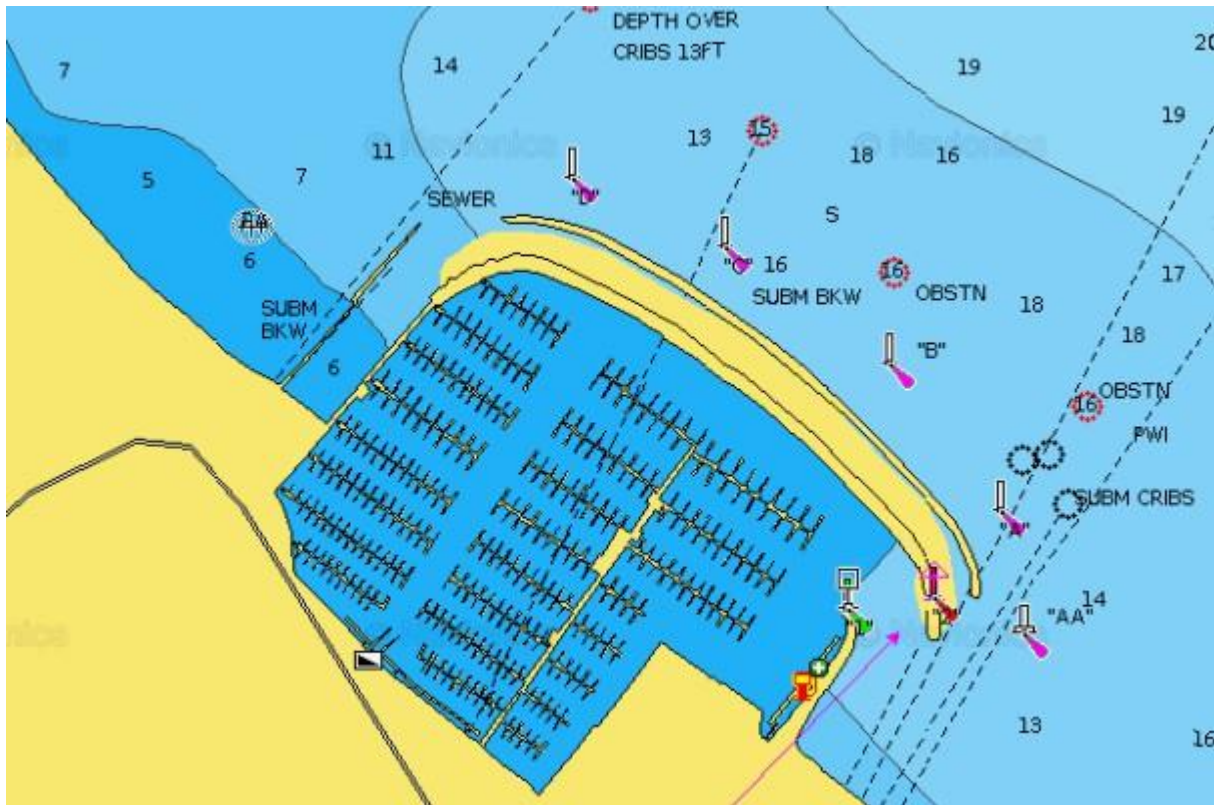
Yacht Club 219-659-9030

Casino 219-244-6540

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***

Dining Options





## B. Calumet Park

Obstacles

US Coast Guard 773-768-4093 (VHF-16)

Boat Ramp

Beach

Restrooms

Dining Options







### C. Jackson Park Outer

Obstacles

Harbormaster 312-481-6390 (VHF-9/16/68)

Fuel Dock 773-442-2194 (VHF-9/16/68)

Jackson Park Yacht Club 773-684-5522

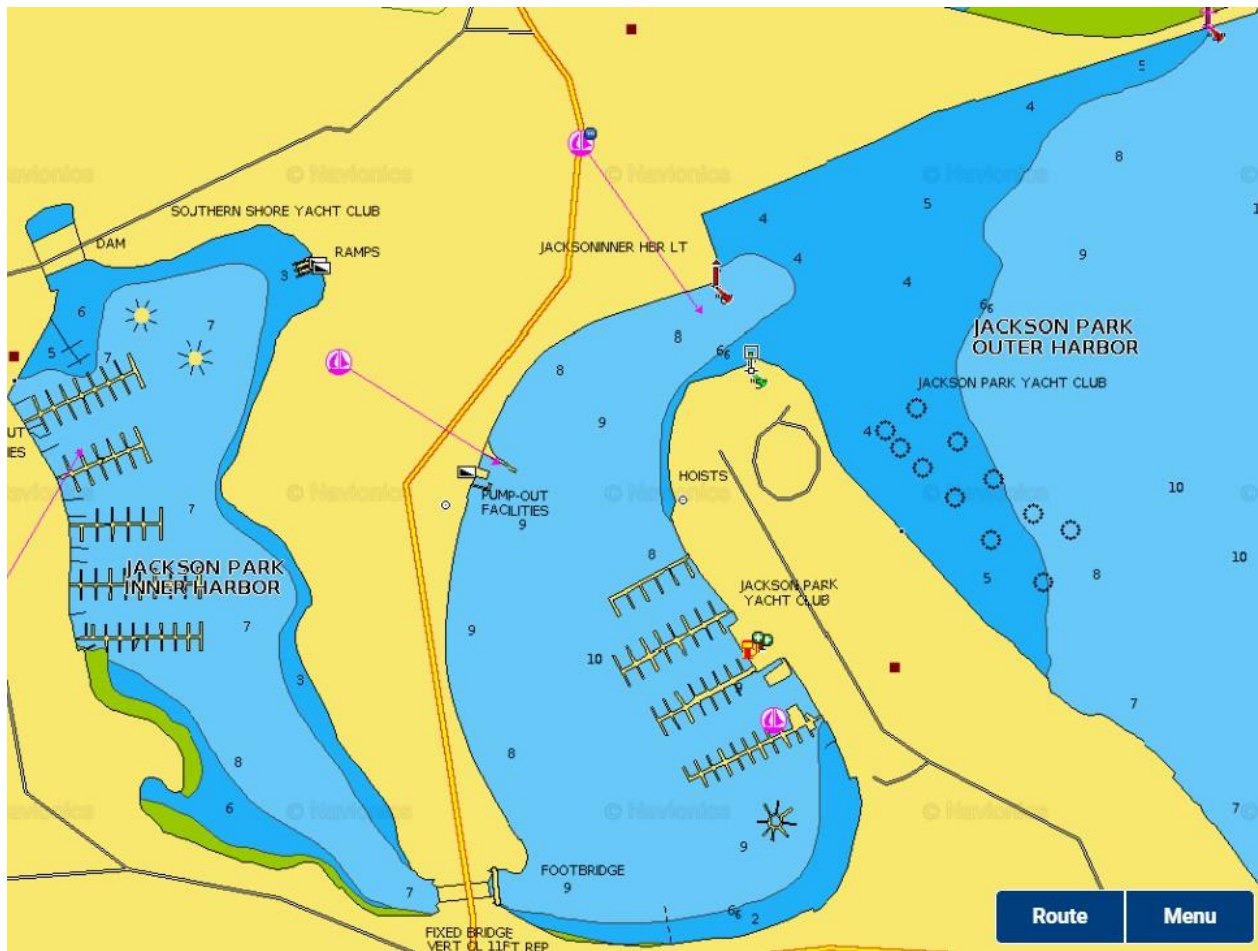
Beach

Restrooms

Dining Options

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***





### **Important South Side Contacts**

**59<sup>th</sup> Street Harbor 312-481-6352 (VHF-9/16/68)**

**Museum Shores Yacht Club 708-308-0794**

**Jackson Park Harbor Fuel Dock 773-442-2194 (VHF-9/16/68)**

**Jackson Park Outer Harbor 312-481-6390 (VHF-9/16/68)**

**Jackson Park Yacht Club 773-684-5522**

**Jackson Park Inner Harbor 312-481-6386 (VHF-9/16/68)**

**South Shore Yacht Club 414-481-2331**



**D. Jackson Park Inner**

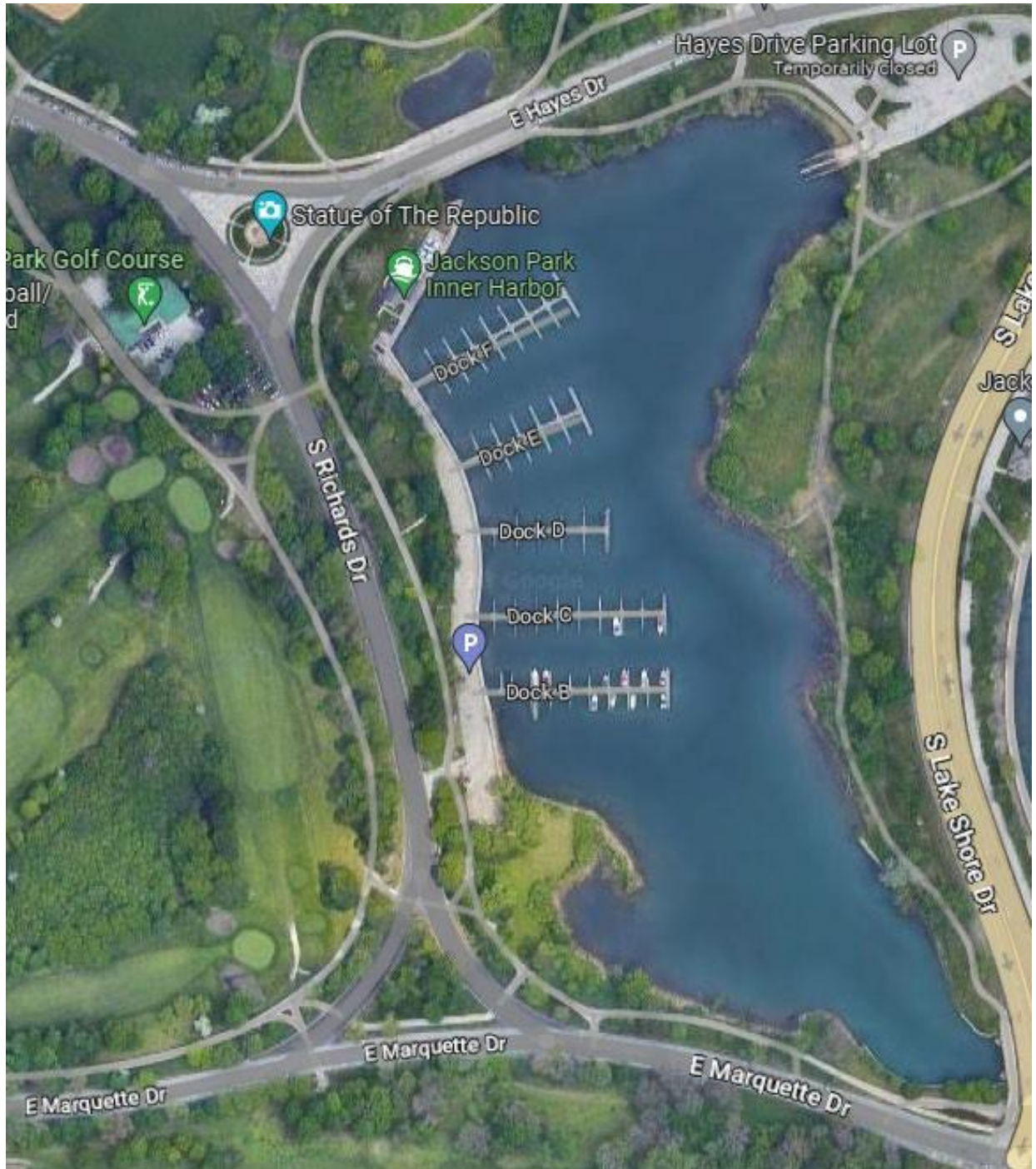
Obstacles / Clearance

Harbormaster 312-481-6386 (VHF-9/16/68)

South Shore Yacht Club 414-481-2331

Facilities

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***



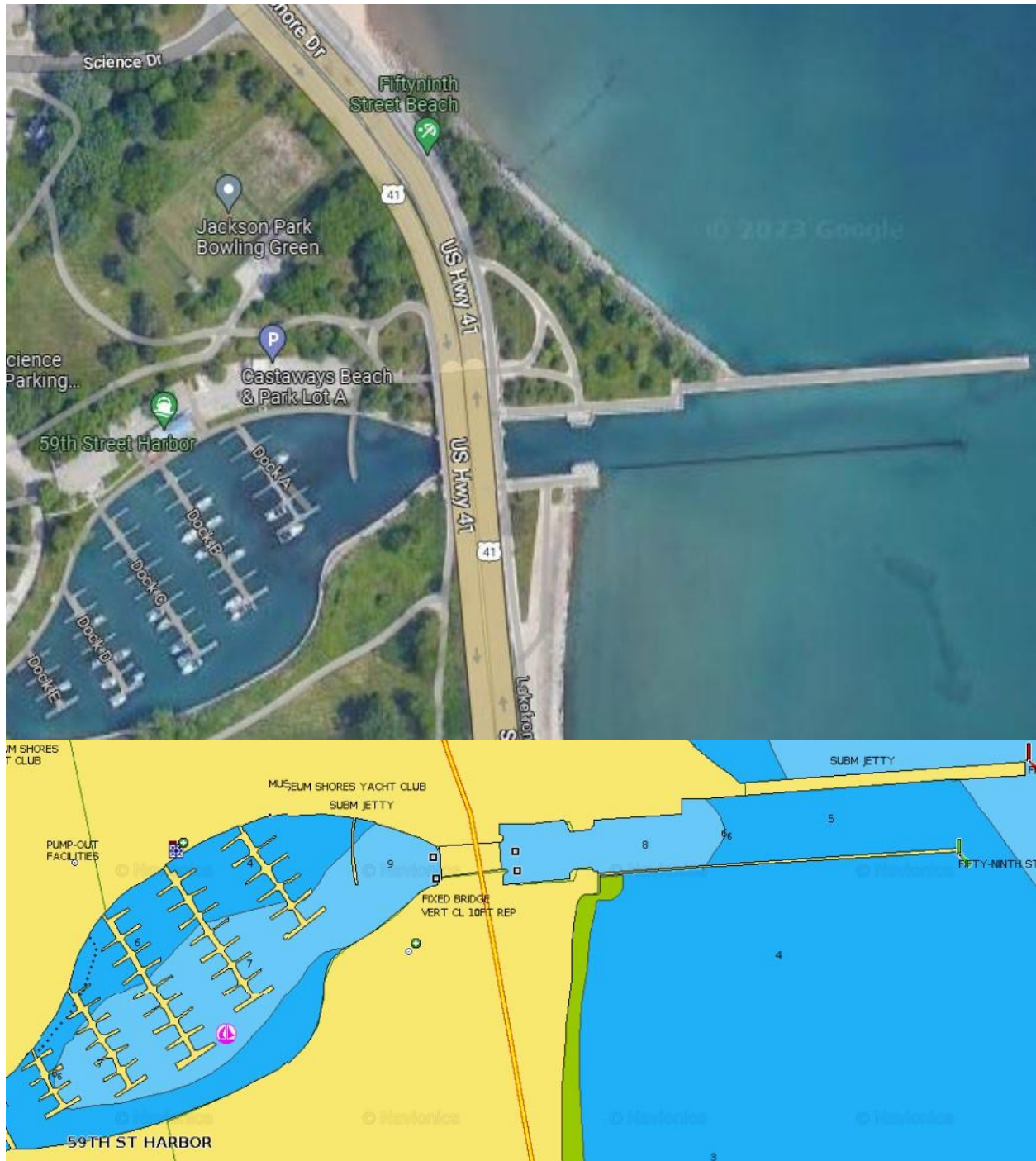
**E. 59<sup>th</sup> Street Harbor**

Obstacles / Clearance

Harbormaster 312-481-6352 (VHF-9/16/68)

Museum Shores Yacht Club 708-308-0794

Facilities





**F. 31<sup>st</sup> Street Harbor**

Obstacles

Harbormaster 312-481-6059

Fuel Dock 312-225-6464

Beach

Boat Rentals & Boat Clubs

Facilities

Courtesy Dock

Boat Launch Ramp

Restaurant / bar

Boat Ramp

Dining Options

Playground with climbing wall

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***

**West Pier**



**East Pier**





#### **G. Burnham Harbor**

Obstacles

Harbormaster 312-448-7124 (VHF-9/16/71)

Fuel Dock 312-448-7124 (VHF-9/16/71)

Ship Store & Restaurant / bar

Burnham Park Yacht Club 312-427-4664

Courtesy Dock

Boat Launch Ramp

Boat Rentals & Boat Clubs

Facilities





#### H. Monroe Harbor

Obstacles

Harbormaster 312-742-7643 (VHF-9/16/68)

Facilities

Chicago Yacht Club @ Monroe 312-861-7777

Courtesy Dock

Tender Service 312-742-7643 (VHF-9/16/68)

Anchor / Swim

Cruise & City Pics

No Parking

Touch-n-Go area

Emergency Access

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***



#### I. DuSable Harbor

Obstacles

Harbormaster 312-292-9499 (VHF-9/16/67)

Columbia Yacht Club 312-938-3625 Facilities

Courtesy Dock

Pump-out Stations

"The Wall"

Touch-n-Go area

Emergency Access

Dining Options

Restricted Area(s)

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***





**J. Diversey Harbor**

Obstacles / Clearance

Harbormaster 312-273-9475 (VHF-16/69)

Fuel Dock 312-273-9475 (VHF-16/69)

Facilities

Diversey Yacht Club 773-929-8819

Boat Rentals & Boat Clubs

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***





## K. Belmont Harbor

Obstacles

Harbormaster 312-270-1295 (VHF-16/69)

Fuel Dock 312-270-1295 (VHF-16/69)

Facilities

Belmont Harbor & Fuel Dock 312-270-1295 (VHF-16/69)

Boat Rentals & Boat Clubs

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***



## L. Montrose Harbor

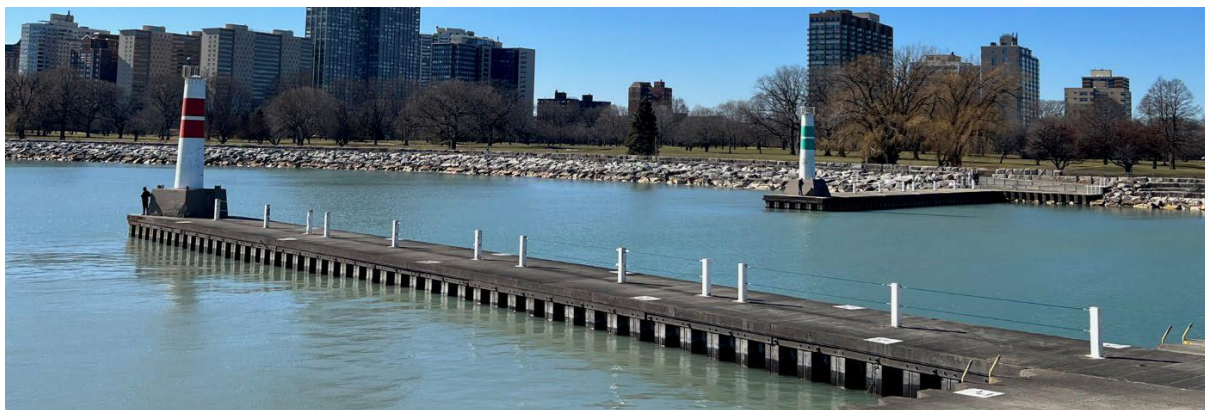
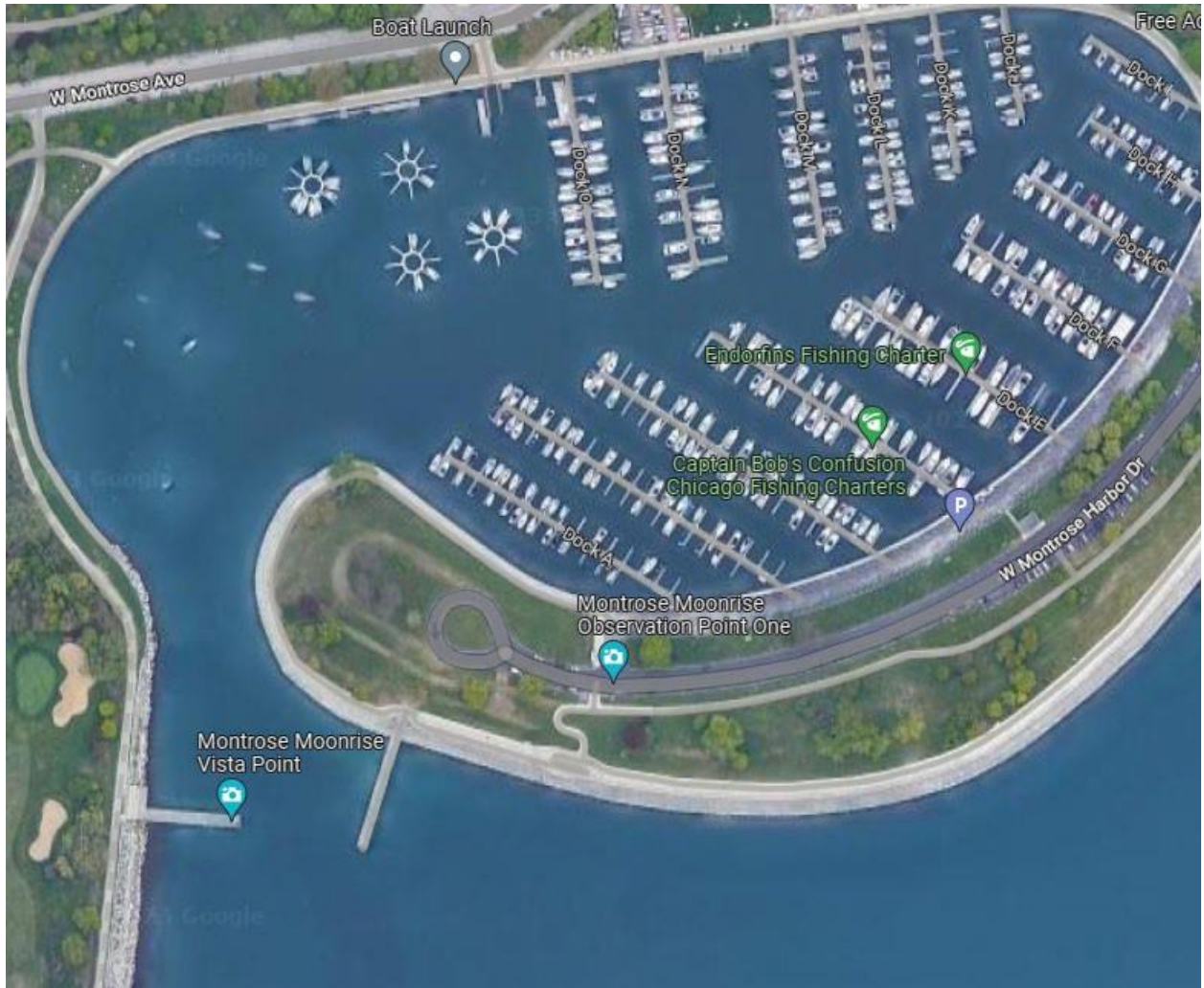
Obstacles

Harbormaster 312-216-0791 (VHF-9/16/71)

Facilities

Corinthian Yacht Club 773-334-9100

Boat Rentals & Boat Clubs





## M. Wilmette Harbor

Obstacles / Depth

Harbormaster 847-251-4234

Fuel Dock 847-251-4234

US Coast Guard Station 847-251-0185 (VHF-16)

Sheridan Shore Yacht Club 847-251-2211

**\*\*Grass for Dogs\*\***



**203. Lock Operations (daytime)**

- A. History & Purpose of Locks
- B. Contacting the Locks 312-787-4795 or VHF-14
- C. Lock Design (3-5' drop, no bollards)
- D. Lock Security & Trespassing on Federal Property
- E. No Drones
- F. Waiting Areas
  - Timing Your Approach
  - Lake Michigan
  - Chicago River
  - Hazards
  - Rafting / Mooring / Tie-off
- G. Priority of Loading and Unloading 1,2,3,4
- H. Stoplights



- **Red light:** DO NOT ENTER. All vessels must wait at the queuing area. Stand clear of departing vessels.
- At this time all passengers must wear their **PFD**, known as personal floating device.
- All vessels shall monitor marine radio channel 14,156.7 MHz for instructions. Operator instructions via radio or public address systems supersede traffic signals.



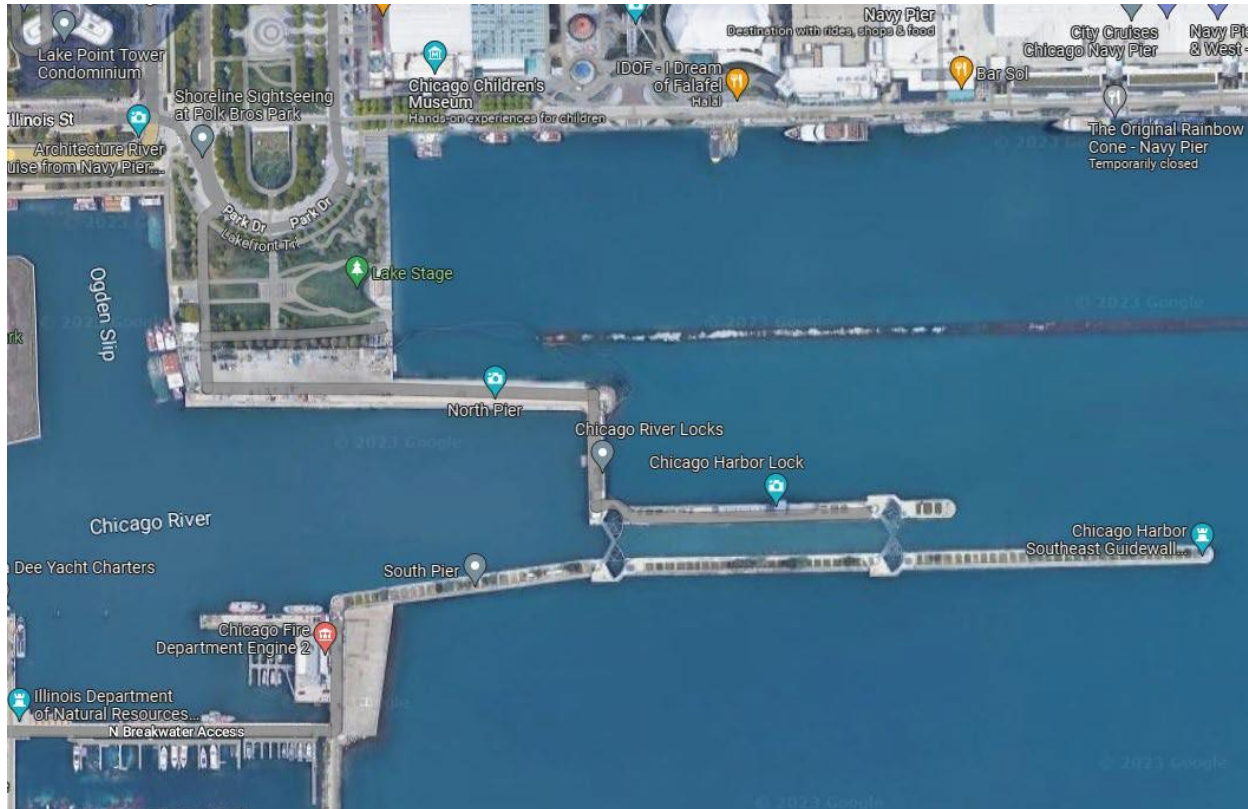
- **Amber Light:** Lock is ready for entrance of government vessels.
- Commercial vessels may enter the lock.
- No recreational vessels are allowed to enter the lock.
- Wait for the lock operator's instruction.



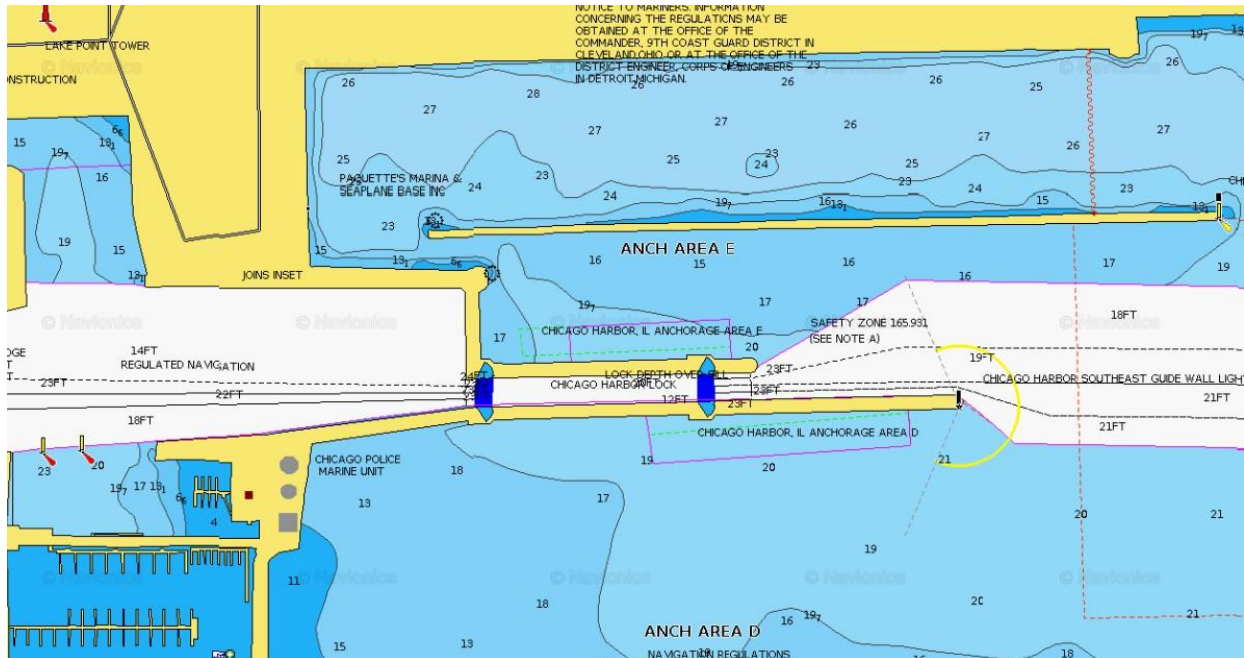
- **Green Light.** Lock is open for all vessels in order of priority. Late arriving vessels may enter with permission of lock operator.
- Keep clear of commercial and government vessels that have priority & will enter before recreational vessels.
- If RED signal appears, all vessels shall stop entering the lock and return to the queuing area.

- I. Horns
- J. PA System
- K. COI / Bare Boat / OUPV / Recreational Requirements
- L. PPE Requirements for Recreational Vessels
- M. PWCs & Sunset

- N. Fireworks Barge & COI Vessels
- O. Entering the Lock (50'-450')
- P. Boat Hooks & Ropes
- Q. Bumpers and Fenders
- R. Rafting & Floating
- S. Lock Etiquette (Music, alcohol, staff)
- T. The Lock Dog and Your Dog
- U. Emergency Procedures
  - Fire (Notify / Fight / Secure / Evacuate)
  - Man Overboard (Engine Off / Push Away / 5-Blasts / VHF)
  - Medical (Lake Michigan) – Polk Street Park
  - Medical (Chicago River) – Police & Fire Station
  - Mechanical (Notify & Await Instructions)
  - Sinking Vessel (Notify & Await Instructions)
- V. Do's and NEVER Do's of the Chicago Locks
- W. Contingency Plans
- X. Emergency Locking
- Y. Exiting the Lock
- Z. Suspension of Locking Privileges







#### 204. Restricted Areas in Harbors, Lake Michigan, and on the River

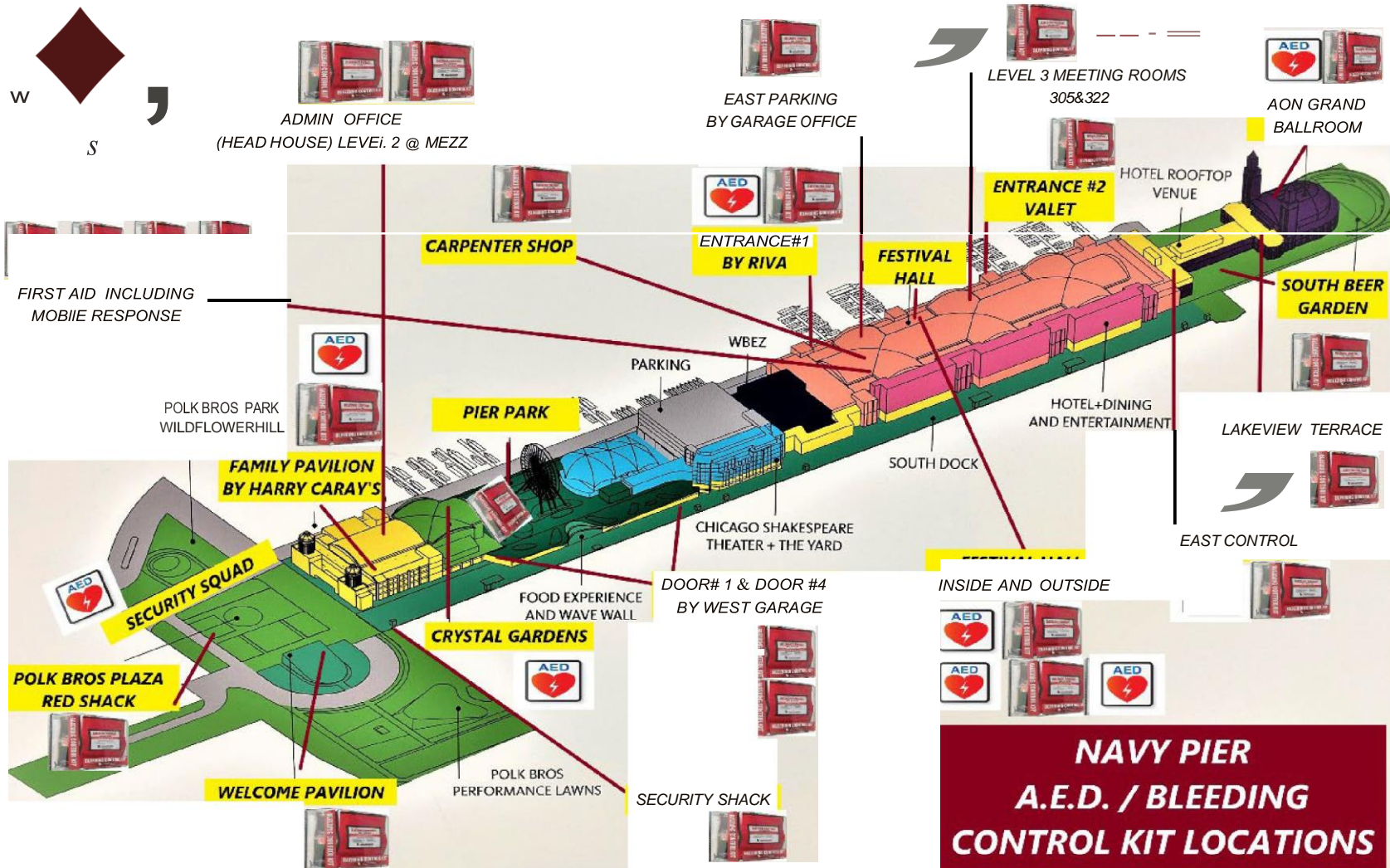
- A. Water Cribs
- B. Water Treatment
- C. Waste Treatment
- D. CPD / USCG Docks
- E. Amtrak Bridge
- F. Amtrak Yard
- G. Fireworks Barge



**205. Safe “Playpen” Anchoring & Swimming.**

- A. Which side of Navy Pier?
- B. Picking the perfect spot
- C. Mitigating risk to swimmers
- D. Wind and wave factors
- E. Reckless marine traffic in swimming areas (PWCs)
- F. The lookout
- G. Emergency procedures





# Emergency Procedures

## Passenger Medical Emergency

### Playpen Area

If a passenger experiences a medical emergency while in the area between the Chicago Locks and Oak Street Beach on Lake Michigan:

1. Secure the victim inside the vessel's cockpit, as far aft as possible.
2. Assess the injuries. (Breathing? Conscious? Bleeding?)
3. Prioritize the injuries on time and resources.
4. Can you stabilize the injured passenger for transport?

**No: Call 911 / Mayday on VHF-16 and remain anchored. Use visual distress signals.**

**Yes: Continue below:**

5. Instruct a non-injured passenger to call 911 and remain on with them until docked. Confirm rescue is enroute to the CTA Bus Loop at Navy Pier.
6. Instruct another non-injured passenger to advise Navy Pier Operations at **(312) 595-5296**.
7. Crew will weigh the anchor and prepare fenders & lines for starboard side approach.
8. 5-short blasts of the vessels horn to warn others of your emergency.
9. If possible, complete an emergency warning call on VHF-16:

"MAYDAY – MAYDAY - MAYDAY: Motor vessel \_\_\_\_\_ is [ *in Playpen, etc.* ] and enroute to the Navy Pier north emergency access point to offload a **seriously** injured passenger who suffered a [ *injury.* ] to their [ *body part.* ]. All vessels are asked to remain clear. Standing-by on channel sixteen."

"PAN-PAN – PAN-PAN – PAN-PAN: Motor vessel \_\_\_\_\_ is [ *in Playpen, etc.* ] and enroute to the Navy Pier north emergency access point to offload an injured passenger who suffered a [ *injury.* ] to their [ *body part.* ]. All vessels are asked to remain clear. Standing-by on channel sixteen."

10. Do not multi-task. Your priority is to drive the boat safely to the emergency access point.
11. Do not rush and make the emergency worse. If the lake is choppy, stay at an aggressive angle.
12. Continue the 5-short blasts on the horn around other boats and corners.
13. Slowdown to minimum speeds within 100' of the landing wall, as your wake will create a cross-wake in the basin.
14. Assign crew and passengers duties such as holding onto the dock; using the dock pole; helping move the victim; going with victim in the ambulance; and notifying the victim's family.

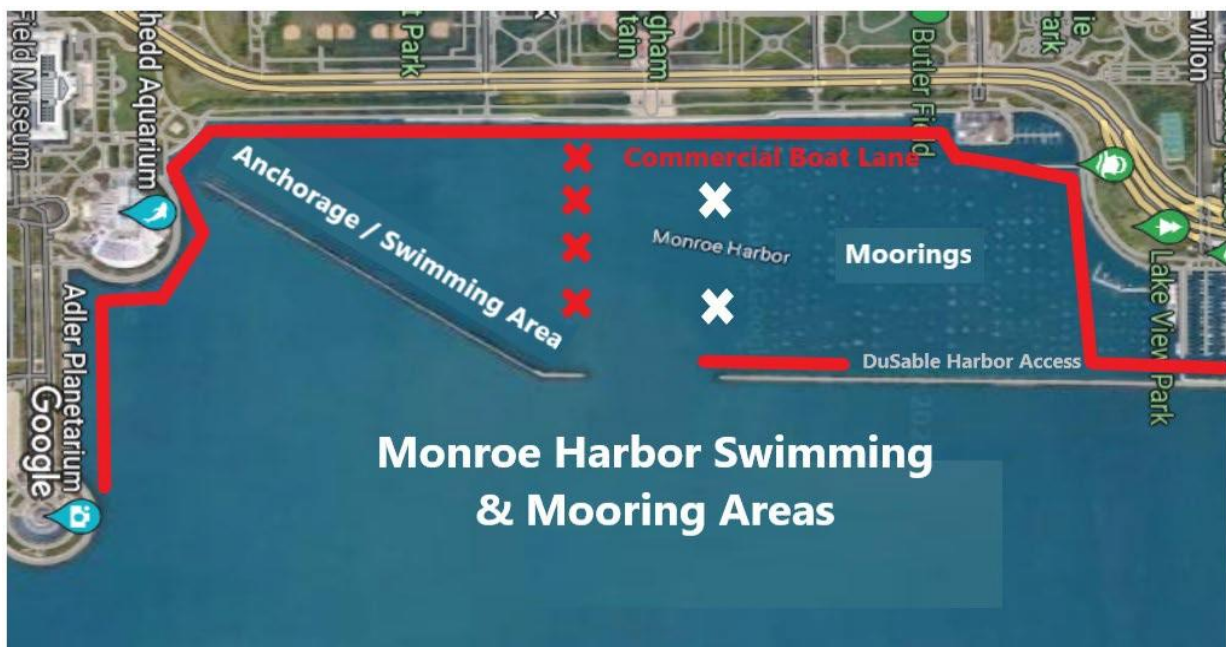


15. After the victim is in the care of first responders, take pictures of all the affected areas of the vessel, including any related mechanical equipment or components.
16. Complete a "Charter Vessel Incident Report" and have your crew complete a report.
17. Do not leave Navy Pier until cleared by IDNR, Chicago PD, Chicago Fire, or US Coast Guard.
18. As soon as the vessel is back at its homeport, report the incident to the operations team.  
Federally Licensed Captains / crews should call (866) 566-0261 and schedule an immediate DOT urinalysis screening. Do not eat or drink anything.

## NAVY PIER EMERGENCY OPERATIONS: (312) 595-5296.

### 206. Safe "Monroe Crib" Anchoring & Swimming

- A. Which side of Navy Pier?
- B. Picking the perfect spot
- C. Mitigating risk to swimmers
- D. Wind and wave factors
- E. Reckless marine traffic in swimming areas (PWCs)
- F. The lookout
- G. Monroe Tender Office
- H. Queen's Landing
- I. Shedd Dock
- J. Emergency procedures



**207. Chicago River Operations and Practices**

- A. Main, North, and South Branches
- B. Stay Right
- C. Ask to Pass
- D. Avoiding Congestion
- E. Drawbridge Procedures
- F. Perfect Picture Areas
- G. The Odgen Slip
- H. MOB
- I. Anticipating the Commercial Traffic Movement

**208. Chicago River Dock-n-Dine Locations and Customs**

- A. Odgen Slip
- B. City Winery
- C. Tiny Tap
- D. Riverwalk transient
- E. Casa Azul
- F. The Salt Shed
- G. Metropolitan Brewing
- H. Lawrence's Seafood

**209. Danger Areas on the River**

- A. USCG Station
- B. Odgen Slip
- C. Wolf Point
- D. Tom Ping Park
- E. Amtrak Bridge
- F. Chicago & Northwestern Bridge
- G. Goose Island
- H. Fireworks Barge
- I. Commercial Barge Traffic
- J. Rental Boats
- K. Sewer Discharge Areas

**210. Boating with Commercial Traffic**

- A. The Law
- B. The Practical Side
- C.  $D = S \times T$  for Commercial Vessels
- D. Giving Way
- E. Hand Signals
- F. Audible Signals
- G. VHF Radio Communication
- H. Bad Behavior Repercussions

## **211. Dockside Vessel Safety Briefing**

1. Introduction to Captain and Mate
2. Introduction to the Vessel
3. Introduction to Bare Boat Chartering
4. Today's Itinerary (Swim, Float, Cruise)
5. Location of Life Jackets for Adults and Children
6. Life Ring and other Throwable PFDs
7. Location of First Aid Kit
8. Fire Extinguisher Locations
9. Fire Procedures
10. Where to Sit / Stand
11. Where NOT to Sit / Stand
12. Docking Procedures (remain seated)
13. Man-Overboard Procedure
14. Swimming & Floating Rules
  - The Swim Platform
  - Diving
  - Swimming Away from the Boat
  - Emergency Water Procedures
  - Rafting with other Boats
15. Smoking Policies
16. Trash Cans, Littering Awareness
17. Head / Sink Operations
18. Location of Hand Sanitizer
19. Who is in Charge of Music and Volume?
20. Questions?

## **Contact Information**

### **Chicago River North Branch** (North to Wolf Point)

Metropolitan Brewing 773-754-0494  
Nine-Nine Asian Bistro 773-799-8802  
Salt Shed 708-967-2168  
Casa Azul 773-770-3766  
Boat Rentals @ Azul 847-737-3098  
Goose Island Boat Yard 312-440-0554  
River North Marina and Boat Club 312-577-7002  
East Bank Club 312-527-5800

### **Chicago River** (Locks Area)

Chicago Locks 312-787-4795 (VHF-14)  
US Coast Guard Chicago 312-946-1048 (VHF-16)  
Chicago Police Marine 312-745-6115 (VHF-16)  
Chicago Fire Marine 312-745-3705 (VHF-16)  
Chicago Lifeguard Boat 312-742-7529 (VHF-16)  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources 217-782-6302 (VHF-16)  
Chicago Harbors 312-741-3601 (VHF-9/16/68)  
Tow Boat US 269-605-9036 (VHF-9/16)  
Anita Dee Charters 312-379-3191 (VHF-13/16)  
Chicago Fireboat Tours 312-919-3367 (VHF-13/16)



City Experiences 312-321-1241 (VHF-13/16)  
Shoreline Sightseeing 312-222-9328 (VHF-13/16)

**Ogden Slip Area** (Chicago River)

Chicago River Boat Architectural Tours 708-488-6343 (VHF-13/16)  
Chicago Line Cruises 312-527-2002 (VHF-13/16)  
Carson's Prime 312-280-9200  
Pinched on the River 312-526-3883  
Robert's Pizza 312-265-1328  
Freedom Boat Club Streeterville 312-995-0429 (VHF 9)  
Target 312-894-1764  
Spring Brook Marine Sales Odgen Slip 888-357-2628

**Central / Main Branch** (East to West)

Urban Kayaks 312-965-0035 (VHF-16)  
Island Party Boat 312-600-8454 (VHF-13/16)  
Chicago First Lady Cruises 847-358-1330 (VHF-13/16)  
Wendella Tours 312-337-1446 (VHF-13/16)  
O'Brien's Riverwalk Café 312-346-3131  
Chicago Brewhouse Riverwalk 312-877-5766  
Smith & Wollensky 312-670-9900  
Marina City Downtown Docks 312-709-1358  
City Winery 312-229-5593  
Tiny Tapp 773-967-0102  
Chicago Water Taxi 563-241-6221 (VHF-13/16)  
Chicago Cycleboats 312-644-6411 (VHF-13/16)  
Barton & Gray Boat Club 617-728-3555 (VHF-13/16)

**South Branch** (South to North)

Chicago Boathouse Park #571 773-823-9135  
Lawrence's Fish and Shrimp 312-225-2113  
Canal Street Marina 312-225-1400  
Amtrak Bridge (PRR #466) 312-655-2242  
Ping Tom Park 312-225-0955  
Amtrak Yard Chicago 312-655-3312  
River City Boat Tours / Summer of George 312-858-6955 (VHF-13/16)  
River City Marina 312-265-8000  
Union Station 312-655-2112

**Northern Lake Michigan** (North to South)

Wilmette Park Sailing Beach 847-256-9662  
Wilmette Gilson Beach House 847-256-9661  
Wilmette Coast Guard Station 847-251-0185 (VHF-16)  
Sheridan Shore Yacht Club 847-251-2211  
Evanston Church Street Boat Ramp 847-866-2900

**Near North Lake Michigan** (North to South)

Montrose Harbor 312-216-0791 (VHF-9/16/71)  
Corinthian Yacht Club 773-334-9100  
Freedom Boat Club Montrose 312-802-4291 (VHF-9)  
Park Bait Company 773-271-2838  
Belmont Harbor & Fuel Dock 312-270-1295 (VHF-16/69)  
Chicago Yacht Club @ Belmont Harbor 312-861-7777

Diversey Harbor 312-273-9475 (VHF-16/69)  
Diversey Yacht Club 773-929-8819  
Freedom Boat Club Diversey 708-669-6998 (VHF-9)  
North Avenue Beach 312-742-3776

**Central Lake Michigan** (North to South)

Oak Street Beach 312-742-3224 (VHF-16 for Lifeguard Boat)  
Ohio Street Beach 312-742-3224 (VHF-16 for Lifeguard Boat)  
Jardine Water Purification Plant 312-744-7001  
Navy Pier Emergency Line 312-595-5296  
Seadog Cruises 312-321-1241  
Tall Ship Windy 312-451-2700  
Chicago Entertainment Cruises 312-854-0820  
DuSable Harbor 312-292-9499 (VHF-9/16/67)  
Columbia Yacht Club 312-938-3625  
Chicago Tiki Boat 312-566-8454  
Chicago Yacht Club @ Monroe 312-861-7777  
Monroe Harbor Tender Office 312-742-7643 (VHF-9/16/68)  
Shoreline Sightseeing @ Shedd 312-222-9328

**Near South** (North to South)

12<sup>th</sup> Street Beach 773-363-2225  
Huntington Bank Pavilion @ Northerly Island 312-288-3190  
Northerly Island Park 312-745-2910  
Burnham Park Yacht Club 312-427-4664  
Burnham Harbor & Ship Store 312-448-7124 (VHF-9/16/71)  
Boat Drinks Bar & Grill 312-838-0544  
Freedom Boat Club Burnham 847-561-7777 (VHF-9)  
31<sup>st</sup> Street Beach & Harbor 312-481-6059  
Chicago Watersports Rental @ 31<sup>st</sup> 312-924-7994  
Salerno's Nautical Playpen 312-945-0551  
Knot My Boat Charters 312-971-0971  
31<sup>st</sup> Street Fuel Dock 312-225-6464  
Carefree Boat Club 888-447-1540

**Southern Lake Michigan** (North to South)

59<sup>th</sup> Street Harbor 312-481-6352 (VHF-9/16/68)  
Museum Shores Yacht Club 708-308-0794  
Jackson Park Harbor Fuel Dock 773-442-2194 (VHF-9/16/68)  
Jackson Park Outer Harbor 312-481-6390 (VHF-9/16/68)  
Jackson Park Yacht Club 773-684-5522  
Jackson Park Inner Harbor 312-481-6386 (VHF-9/16/68)  
South Shore Yacht Club 414-481-2331  
Calumet Park US Coast Guard 773-768-4093 (VHF-16)  
Crowley's Yacht Yard 773-221-9990  
Tom O'Brien Locks 773-646-2183 (VHF-14)  
Sunset Bay Marina 773-646-9900  
Marine Services / Dolton 708-841-5660  
Hammond Port Authority & Ship Store 219-659-7678 (VHF-9/16)  
Hammond Yacht Club 219-659-9030  
Hammond Fuel Dock 219-473-9907 (VHF-9/16)  
Freedom Boat Club Hammond 269-332-6071 (VHF-9)  
Horseshoe Casino Hammond 219-244-6540

## What's Next?

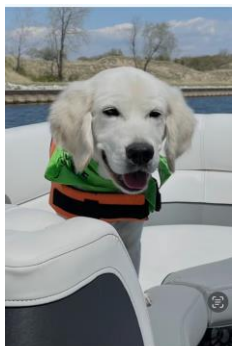
Now that you have taken your Boat Safe Chicago training, do you feel like you are ready to go out onto Lake Michigan and enjoy boating with family and friends? Are you interested in becoming a credentialed mate or a licensed captain? How about operating a charter business? Boat Safe Chicago offers private, one-on-one training on your boat at your marina. We also offer maritime business consultation and much more!  
So....

- ✓ Sign Up for Another Boat Safe Chicago Class?
- ✓ Hire a US Coast Guard Licensed Master Captain for Private Lessons?
- ✓ Get your Captain's License?
- ✓ Join the Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary?
- ✓ Explore the World of Charter Boat Operators and Owners?
- ✓ Tell your Friends and Family how much FUN you have with us?

## THINKING ABOUT CAPTAIN SCHOOL?

Interested in Captain School? We have online options offered at a discount (use code BoatSafeChicago) or ask us about in person captain training options in TEXAS.

[Click here for Online Captain School](#)



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YAMAHA

**[www.BoatSafeChicago.com](http://www.BoatSafeChicago.com)**