

Boaters Rafting Up

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My heart goes out to the folks affected by the recent hurricanes Helene and Milton. They will need support for many months and years and I hope you all support them as best you can. Boaters helping boaters.

Rafting Up is a great way to enjoy your boat with friends and family. You can easily expand your boating social networks via rafting up. Always ask before you attempt to raft up to any boat and make sure you have a plan on your approach. How to safely raft up with other boats is key. Here are some Quick Tips for rafting up with another boat

The largest, heaviest boat should drop its anchor first, and serve as the building block for the raft up. As other boats approach, they should approach very slowly, with their fenders deployed. Alternate which side you join the anchor boat, you want to keep the anchor boat in the middle. Make sure all passengers keep their hands and feet in the boat while rafting up, getting pinched is not much fun.

Always secure boats to one another using the Cleats...not the rail stations, handrails, or other accessories. Creating an X shape with the lines bow to stern and stern to bow is best. Keep the lines tight between the boats to minimize motion between the boats. Have someone assigned to verify the raft up is not pulling the anchor, if so, they need to alert the captains and more rode might be needed or another boat needs to add an additional anchor. As is always the case when boating, make sure there's a sober skipper at all times assigned for the raft up.

Some other things to consider:

- The size of the boats differ drastically, line up the swim platforms sometimes is a good approach. Try to keep similar type boats together; pontoon boats, for example are likely to sit very differently than wakeboard boats. They can both be part of the raft up but keeping pontoons together and wakeboards together will help with tie up issues. A high freeboard boat next to a low freeboard boat makes for an interesting point to pass when moving along the boats in a raft up.
- Be aware of carbon monoxide levels and the potential of exhaust build up. If there are families with children then appropriate language and actions are prudent. Be considerate of others with your sound systems both with volume and content.

- If you see a raft up on the water your wake is very dangerous and you should have no wake when passing a raft up. Never cut between a raft up and the beach and always pass at the bow side of a raft up.

This is just a taste of what you need to know while boating and the more you learn the safer you will be.

This article is given courtesy of your local America's Boating Club of the Pamlico a great resource to help you increase your knowledge, navigation skill building and safety. We have short seminars and in-depth courses conducted throughout the year. The next course being offered is the Engine Maintenance Course. To learn more details, contact Kelly at pspsed@gmail.com or give her a call at 551-427-0585.