

# Boating After Storms

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We just experienced flooding by Debby and I hope you all fared well and were not damaged. The next day could be a beautiful sunny calm day “let’s go out on the boat”... This is not a good idea. After storms and flooding there are many new hazards.

Some that are barely afloat and hard to see. Flooding water sets afloat all sorts of things, from propane tanks, refrigerators, and kids yard toys as examples. Navigation aids can be moved off location, or go missing altogether. Shoals/channels may have moved or shifted, newly exposed dead heads will appear, full trees can be floating with only a branch at the surface. A story I heard was a picnic table was seen floating upside down and only the a few inches of each leg showing. That is really had to see if you are not diligent. In our marina we once had a section of docking with a picnic table and blue umbrella sitting in a slip. Later we found out who lost it, and they came to retrieve it, which was a funny story. I am sure there are many stories out there about what you have seen, which I would love to hear about.

There will be many hours/days/weeks of debris and partially sunken hazard’s, not to mention water pollutants that you don’t need to expose your boat or yourself too. How long do you need to wait really depends on many factors. You can check with dock masters, fellow boaters, fishermen about their experiences and advice.

When you do venture out after enough time, look for isolated ripples, sticks or shiny spots on the water. Double check channels and shoals carefully. Trust your plotter and dept sounder going slowly to keep you from running aground. Keep a keen eye out on other boaters whom may not have been as diligent and may need your help. Make sure you are listening to your VHF radio very closely for Securite alerts which might prevent you from having a bad day.

A good idea is to subscribe to the Local Notice to Mariners, the Coast Guard’s weekly update of among other things, missing and off-station aids to navigation. Awareness is key and knowing these hazards and how to spot them is key so after a storm or flooding be very careful and watch out for yourself and others.

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 courses conducted throughout the year. We

invite you to visit our website, <https://www.pamlicosailandpowersquadron.org>, or contact Kelly at [pspsed@gmail.com](mailto:pspsed@gmail.com) to learn what opportunity is coming up this summer.