



Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron

Rafting Guidelines

5 November 2012

Revised 12 July 2013

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General Statement

Throughout the year the Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron (CFS&PS) has many raft-ups for fun, friendship, and to gain experience. Raft-ups are generally social activities sponsored by CFS&PS. In order for you to fully enjoy this experience, the Cruising Committee is providing the following guidelines so that your participation will be both safe and enjoyable. If you intend to participate in a raft-up, some simple preparation on your part is necessary.

Signing up for a raft-up or cruising event:

Information on all of the upcoming raft-ups is posted on our website

<http://www.capefearpowersquadron.org/> under "Boating Activities Schedule" in the "Members Only" section and in the "Squadron Events" section, at Membership Meetings, and the *Cape Fear Foghorn*. Remember that a fair amount of planning by each Cruise Captain(s) goes into each raft-up, so it is important that you sign up online with a provided link in advance. Also remember if you sign up and your plans change, please remove your name from the list online.

Required raft-up items:

1. Your boat must meet USCG required standards for day and night safety equipment.
2. Plenty of adequately sized fenders; at least 4 but more are always better.
3. A minimum of 4 dock lines: bow, stern and springs of adequate size and length.
4. Bow and stern lines should be a minimum of 25' in length. Spring lines should be a minimum of 30' in length.
5. A bow anchor, chain and/or rode of adequate size for your boat if you are an "anchoring boat." Optional stern anchor, if you have one on-board.

Easy steps on how to safely and successfully join a raft-up:

Each raft-up has a Raft Master or a Cruise Captain. They are responsible for determining the appropriate placement of all boats in the raft-up. They will determine the order and when each boat should approach. They will also determine that you are adequately prepared with fenders, lines and crew to conduct a safe approach. Follow their directions and come in SLOWLY. If this is your first raft-up remember we have all been there before. If you feel you cannot comply with the Raft-Master directions feel free to anchor alone apart from the raft-up on your own. A raft-up is usually composed of one continuous raft.

1. Prior to approaching the raft-up, call the Raft-Master on an assigned channel. Have your CFS&PS burgee flying for identification. Be patient if you are not acknowledged right away as they may be busy assisting other boats. Listen carefully as you will be directed to your position in the raft-up and they will indicate if you are to be a starboard or port tie.
2. At this time, you will also be informed if you will be dropping an anchor(s). Remember to have one ready to be deployed.
3. If you are dropping your anchor on your approach, judge the wind and current accurately for the safety of the other boats. Maneuver ahead of the raft up and drop your bow anchor approximately the same distance from the raft up. If you are dropping an anchor, it's a good idea to attach a floating buoy and trip-line to the anchor to aid in removal later and to identify its' position to others. Remember to have this prepared ahead of time.

4. Once the anchor is down, back in slowly while letting out your anchor rope/chain. When near the raft up, cleat your anchor line and back down on the anchor to set it, then release the anchor line and continue maneuvering into the raft-up. Once secured in the raft up, apply tension to your anchor line once again so that it is helping maintain the strain for the raft-up. If we have a dingy, the Raft-Master may determine if he will deploy the anchor(s) after you have securely tied to the raft-up.
5. After you have been given your location in the raft-up, have three (3) fenders in place and the bow, stern, and spring lines secured and ready to throw to the right or left of the crew on the Raftor boat. It is very important that you are ready as you approach the raft-up. **Approach SLOWLY and in control.**
6. Have your crew toss your lines to your neighboring boat, where they will be secured by their crew and adjusting fenders as necessary.
7. Tie up your boat expeditiously like you would at a dock with a bow, stern, and two spring lines. When bow to the wind, an important line to maintain transom alignment between boats is the forward quarter spring from the *outer* boat to the *inner* boat.
8. Stay alert as there will probably be another boat coming in next to you. Stay aboard your boat to help secure the next arriving vessel.

Engines:

The most important asset to your vessel is her engine(s). These assets should also be used to position the boat even while in close proximity to the Raftee. They greatly reduce the amount of struggling that your shipmates endure while trying to secure your boat without them. For this reason and those that may not be expected, the engines should never be turned off until the boat is SECURE. This means that both lines (fore and aft) are cleated and the boat is no longer in motion.

Dragging Anchors:

One contingency we prepare for is dragging anchors. If this happens it's important to keep the formation lashed together. The Raft Master will come up on a VHF radio, and carefully coordinate a forward movement to reposition the anchors simultaneously. Just the anchor boats will start engines. The Raft Master will be the only person giving instructions. In the worst case, we'd have to break up the formation and start over.

Guidelines for breaking-up:

Depending on weather conditions, these break-up guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Raft-Master. All hands are expected to be on their vessels in preparation for the break up at least 30 minutes prior.

1. The Raft Master will hold a skippers' meeting to discuss the break-up process and procedures will be determined, based upon weather, wind, current and/or other pertinent conditions.

2. When the raft-up begins to break-up, all vessels should be prepared to disengage. This includes having motors running and all crew on station. Each boat should be prepared to retrieve their bow anchor after breaking away from the raft-up. Do not pull anchors too early as this can cause the raft to swing.
3. Boats usually “peel off” in order from both sides from the center depending upon wind direction and speed. The order of break-up will be determined by the wind and weather conditions and you will be informed by the Raft Master or Cruise Captain. Note: In windy conditions, the raft-up will break up beginning on the leeward end. Be patient and wait your turn. Under no circumstances should a boat leave from the middle of the raft.

Other related items:

1. If you have a special request as to your placement in the raft-up let the Raft Master or Cruise Captain know well in advance. They will try to accommodate you.
2. Pets on board are fine. Be considerate of your neighbors.
3. If you bring a dingy, make sure you have all USCG required day and night safety equipment on board.
4. Do not run a generator while in a raft-up. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a hazard for people under the lee of a running generator. Also, most boat owners don't want exhaust blown against their topsides for long periods of time. Be respectful of your neighbors.

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Administrative Officer

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