

## Whittier Harbor Happenings August 2021

Cooler weather is upon us and its starting to feel a little like fall is creeping in. Here are some updates and new information that may be of interest for you.

I'd like to start off and thank the outstanding staff here at the Harbor. Rose, Sandra, Boni, Kylo, Nelson, Lavi and Liam have worked hard this season to keep everything in order and they certainly make my job easier. We are constantly working on improving processes and making the Harbor better for all our users. If you have ideas let us know.

### **Barry Arm:**

[Barry Arm Landslide | Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys](#)

There is nothing new to report regarding the Barry Arm situation. I would encourage you to visit the U.S. Geological website for the most up to date information. They have updated the website with some great steps to take if you are boating in a tsunami prone area. I have copied and pasted for your reference. Bottom line, have a plan, ensure that your family and guests know the plan and don't think it won't happen to you.

For a large, local-source tsunami that may arrive in 10-20 minutes:

- **If you are on land or tied up at the dock:** Do not attempt to take your vessel offshore. Leave your boat and go to high ground on foot as soon as possible. You do not have time to save your boat in this situation and put your life (and potentially the lives of others) at risk if you try to do so.
- **If you are in deep water or very close to deep water:** Take your vessel further offshore beyond the "minimum offshore safe depth" of at least 30 fathoms (180 ft).
- **If you are on the water but very near shore:** Use your best judgement to decide between two options: safely beach/dock the vessel and evacuate to high ground, or go beyond the minimum offshore safe depth of 30 fathoms (180 ft). Attempting to beach the vessel could be challenging and dangerous depending on wave conditions, coastlines and terrain, water levels, and the presence of sand bars. It is easy for a boat to run aground or capsize before reaching the shore only to then be swept away by the incoming tsunami. However, if you can safely beach or dock your boat and get to high ground before the tsunami, then this is your best option. If that is not possible, head to deep water as quickly as possible.

In general:

- Contact your harbormaster or community emergency services to sign up for tectonic tsunami alerts. **Multiple notification options found here: <https://www.tsunami.gov/?page=productRetrieval>**
- Know where deep water (30 fathoms or more, 180+ ft) is and how long it will take you to get there.
- Have adequate supplies (water, shelter, food) and fuel to remain at sea for 24 hours or more and do not return to the harbor until the harbormaster or port captain indicates it is safe to do so. You may be forced to return to a different harbor.
- Do not take your boat offshore if you do not have these essential preparedness items.

### **Harbor Theft:**

Nothing more frustrating than coming down to your boat and finding your net, fishing pole or shrimp pots have been lifted off your boat. I have been speaking with some concerned harbor

users recently and it would appear we are experiencing an uptick in theft in our harbor. To date Whittier PD has received 5 reports of theft (one from Nov of 2020) for the summer of 2021. Harbors are easy targets with the number of transient vessels coming and going. We have discussed additional harbor staff for 24 hours security, locking gate at the dock approach, cameras and WIFI. While these are all good solutions, we must consider cost, feasibility and our marine environment.

A great first step for boaters is to not make yourself a target. Lock up your gear if possible. Invest in a cellular supported security camera such as Spy Point ([SPYPOINT](#)) or something similar. If you are a victim of theft, make a report to Whittier PD and ask for a report number. You can call and let us know here at the harbor however that isn't an official police report. Lastly, if you see anything suspicious in the harbor during normal work hours give the office a call and we can check it out, after hours call Whittier PD.

**Selling your boat? Please fill out a Bill of Sale:**

There have been several instances over the past few months where boats have sold, and the harbor was not notified. Why do we need to know you ask? We rely on the information we have in our Harbor database concerning owners. If we haven't been made aware of the sale and the new owner hasn't registered with us, you are the last known owner and will get the bill. A bill of sale is straight forward and needs to be signed by both parties. Scan it and email it over to the office, simple as that and can save us all from a lot of confusion.

**Parking:**

I have received a few emails regarding lack of parking in Whittier. Whittier has become a hot spot and I can remember as far back as 2000 having difficulty finding parking. I mentioned doing away with the boat storage area and utilizing that for parking during the August Harbor Advisory Board meeting. They were supportive of that idea, and I will be approaching the City Council with that recommendation in upcoming meetings. A quick measurement of the area and I think we could gain an additional 20-25 spaces. While that doesn't seem like much every little bit counts.

**Electric Vehicle Charging Stations **\*\*Survey Time\*\***:**

Is there any interest in the harbor installing/providing charging stations for electric vehicles? Let me know. I have been researching the Infrastructure Bill and I noted that there will be up to \$55 million available for charging station grants. Not sure what those look like just yet but always worth planning for if there is interest.

**Winter Transient Moorage Rate:**

For those of you interested in keeping your boat in the water over the winter season, Whittier Harbor offers a rate of \$45.00 a foot. This rate is in affect starting 1 October through 30 March. There is a requirement to have a local boat watch to deal with snow loads and weather-related issues that may arise. Call the office and speak with Rose or Sandra and they can provide you with all the information if you are interested in taking advantage of this winter rate.

**Restrooms:**

The harbor area wide restrooms are up and running. We will keep the portable units in place to deal with the increased usage until mid-September. Let us know if you find any problems so we can address it quickly.

**Travel Lift:**

The structural inspection has been completed on the City Dock however I'm still awaiting the completed report. Once the report is received, I will brief the City Council on the results and recommendations moving forward.

Cheers and thank you for being a Whittier Harbor user!

Dave

David Borg  
Harbormaster  
City of Whittier  
(W)907-472-2327  
(F)907472-2472  
<https://www.whittieralaska.gov/whittier-harbor/>