



Southwestern Yacht Club Cruising Committee

GUIDELINES FOR SWYC RAFT-UPS

Raft-ups are one of the “funnest” (and sometimes “funniest”) social activities sponsored by SWYC. 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 SWYC raft-up, some simple preparation on your part is necessary.

Signing up for a raft-up or cruising event:

Information on all upcoming raft-ups is posted on the “Mooring Line,” the SWYC website (www.southwesternyc.org) and the Weekly Halyard via email. Remember that a fair amount of planning by the event hosts goes into each raft-up, so it is important that you sign up in advance. A sign up sheet for each raft-up is posted about 4-6 weeks in advance on the front office counter. Also remember if you sign up and your plans change, please remove your name from the list.

Required raft-up items:

- Your boat must meet USCG required standards for day and night safety equipment.
- Plenty of adequately sized fenders-at least 4, but more is always better.
- A minimum of 3 mooring (dock) lines; bow, stern and spring of adequate size and length.
- Bow and stern lines should be a minimum of 25’ in length. Spring lines should be a minimum of 30’ in length.
- Both a bow AND stern anchor, chain and/or rode of adequate size for your boat if you were anchoring out by yourself. It is recommended that if you are using a combination chain/line rode that the length of chain is at least equal to the length of your boat for the bow anchor, and at least 10’ of chain for the stern anchor. Be prepared to deploy either one or both depending on wind, weather and other current conditions.

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

Each raft-up has a friendly and cheerful Host or Raft Master. They are responsible for determining the appropriate placement of all boats in the raft-up. The Raft Master and an assistant will be in a dingy to greet you upon arrival. At this time, they will determine that you are adequately prepared with fenders, lines and crew to conduct a safe approach. Please follow their directions in an equally friendly and cheerful manner. Please 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 please feel free to anchor apart from the raft-up on your own.) A SWYC raft-up is usually composed of one continuous raft. Please do not ask to start a separate raft as these are discouraged for safety and logistical reasons.

1. Prior to approaching the raft –up, call the Raft-Master on Channel 72. Have your SWYC club burgee flying for identification. Please be patient if you are not acknowledged right away as they may be busy assisting another boat. Listen carefully as you will be directed to your position in the raft-up and indicate if you are to be a starboard or port tie.
2. At this time you will also be informed that you will be dropping a bow anchor and/or a stern anchor. Remember to have both ready to be deployed. **FOR SAFETY REASONS, EVERY BOAT IN THE RAFT-UP WILL HAVE EITHER A BOW OR STERN ANCHOR DEPLOYED-NO EXCEPTIONS**. Bow and stern anchors usually alternate from boat to boat. This decision is at the discretion of the Raft-Master.
3. Do not drop your anchor on your approach. The raft-master will assist you with this after you have securely tied to the raft-up.
4. After you have been given your location in the raft-up, have your fenders in place and bow and stern lines secured and ready to throw. It is very important that you are ready as you approach the raft-up. Approach **SLOWLY** and in control.
5. Have your crew member toss your lines to your neighboring boat, where they will be secured by their crew; adjust fenders as necessary.
6. Tie up your boat expeditiously. You will have plenty of time to socialize later. Immediately prepare to drop your bow and/or stern anchor as previously directed. The Raft-Master will assist in dropping these anchors, so just follow directions. If you are dropping a stern 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.
7. Stay alert as there will probably be another boat coming in next to you. Please stay aboard your boat to help secure the next arriving vessel.

Guidelines for breaking-up on the final day:

- Depending on weather conditions, these break-up guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Raft-Master.
- Raft-ups are usually scheduled to break at approximately 1200 hours on the final day. All hands are expected to be on their vessels in preparation for the break up at least 30 minutes prior.
- The Raft-Master will hold a skippers meeting on the final morning of the raft-up. At this time, the break-up process will be discussed and final procedures will be determined, based upon weather, wind, current and/or other pertinent conditions.
- 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. If you need assistance in pulling your stern anchor, someone will take you out in a dingy if yours is already stowed. Please do not pull anchors too early as this can cause the raft to swing.

- Boats usually “peel off” in order from both sides toward 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 at the Skippers meeting. Note: In windy conditions, the raft-up will break up beginning on the leeward end. Please be patient and wait your turn. Under no circumstances should a boat leave from the middle of the raft.

Other related items:

- Be thoughtful and considerate of the Raft Master and their assistant. They will have spent a considerable amount of time in their dingy helping others.
- If you have a special request as to your placement in the raft-up let the Raft Master know. They will try to accommodate you. It will help if you arrive with the fellow boat you want to be next to.
- Pets on board are fine. Please be considerate of your neighbors.
- If you bring a dingy, make sure you have all USCG required day and night safety equipment on board.
- It’s OK to run a generator if you wish, please be respectful of your neighbors peace and quiet. In no case should generators be run before 0800 hrs and after 2100hrs.
- It should go without saying: Illegal substances of any sort are not part of any SWYC sponsored event and will not be tolerated.
- As stated, raft ups are usually scheduled to break-up at 1200 hrs on the last day. If you must depart earlier, be sure to let the Raft Master know upon your arrival and they will attempt to accommodate your placement so that a minimum of disruption to other members occurs. You may decide to anchor nearby, by yourself.

