

To Be Boat Smart, Be Sure To Update Your Charts

(NAPSA)—Smart sailors know that any time can be the right time to get your boat in “ship-shape” condition. Equipment inspection, inventory and repair are all necessary preparations to ensure safe sailing. Another item that should be on every boater’s checklist is updating paper and electronic navigation charts.

The Alliance for Safe Navigation (ASN) suggests that updated paper charts—coupled with updated electronic charts—are the best approach to safe navigation.

Unfortunately, using old charts can lead to expensive collisions and groundings. According to recent ASN research, 25 percent of boaters reported running aground in the past five years. Statistics published by the U.S. Coast Guard indicate that groundings and collisions with fixed and submerged objects caused nearly \$11 million in property damage in 2011. And that’s just from reported incidents. Industry experts say the actual number is much higher.

Seas of Change

In 2011, record flooding affected many waterways, while in 2012, the same channels experienced serious droughts. No matter the conditions, boaters must contend with things like underwater hazards, shifting sandbars and changes to NavAids, not to mention rising and falling tides that can affect safe clearance above and below the waterline.

Navigating with up-to-date charts is often the only way boaters can stay aware of changes and plan for them.

Keeping Up with Change

Great strides have been made to gather changes to our waterways and make them available to the boating public.



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Electronic chart producers have implemented a variety of ways for boaters to receive updated information. For example, most digital chart manufacturers offer inexpensive updates either annually or semiannually by providing replacement chart cards, dealer-direct updating while you wait, or downloads directly from the manufacturer’s website.

Boaters who believe that their older electronic charts are “close enough” would be wise to consider recent statistics. The latest fall 2012 release of Jeppesen’s C-MAP MAX cartography included thousands of NTM changes—the newest chart for the U.S. East Coast and Bahamas required more than 8,000 updates alone.

An Ounce of Prevention

Up-to-date navigation charts—and the confidence that comes with them—should be an essential item on every boater’s checklist. Accurate charts, when used correctly, help keep boaters in the channel and away from dangers.

The Alliance for Safe Navigation consists of industry leaders sharing a commitment to boating safety.

To learn more, visit www.allianceforsafenavigation.org.