



# Marine Safety Information Bulletin

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U.S. Coast Guard  
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## Monitoring Weather Conditions and Forecasts

Multiple marine casualties in recent years highlight the need for a renewed emphasis for vessel crews to routinely monitor weather conditions and forecasts, and to take actions to prepare their vessel prior to encountering severe weather. The chance of sudden storms with high winds, rain, and reduced visibility occurs frequently in the marine environment. Prudent monitoring of weather conditions and forecasts is crucial to sound decision making.

Coastal weather forecasts and storm warnings are broadcast on VHF channels 16 (156.800 MHz) and 22A (157.100 MHz). Per 33 CFR 26.03, certain commercial vessels are required to carry marine radios capable of transmitting and receiving signals on both of these channels. Other available sources for marine weather information include, but are not limited to:

- The National Weather Service's (NWS) website (which also references several voluntary weather reporting programs);
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio; and
- Navigational Telex (NAVTEX), which is part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS).

The Coast Guard recommends that vessel owners, operators, and marine crews evaluate all available means to monitor marine weather conditions and forecasts to determine the best course of action for their vessels and their intended routes. The Coast Guard further recommends that owners and operators implement or update guidance for how frequently a vessel master should check weather conditions and forecasts before and during transits.

Questions regarding these requirements should be sent to the Coast Guard Office of Operating and Environmental Standards, by email at [CG-OES@uscg.mil](mailto:CG-OES@uscg.mil).

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