



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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WebWatch

Division 8, 5NR

December 2010

A. DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL RESERVE MOBILIZATION AND RESERVE PROGRAM DIRECTION

RDML S. L. Stosz, Director of Reserve and Leadership

1. The ongoing Deepwater Horizon oil spill response occasioned the largest recall of the Coast Guard Selected Reserve since 9/11. Six months into this operation, more than 2,500 Reservists have been mobilized, more than 440 have accepted voluntary ADOS orders, and more than 300 remain mobilized today. This challenging operation has affirmed the value of the Coast Guard Reserve and verified the necessity of moving forward with important program improvements.
2. Congratulations and thanks to everyone who helped and continues to help the Reserve Force provide such extensive support to our Operational Commanders: the Coast Guard Reservists who maintained personal readiness and answered the call, the Commanders, Commanding Officers, and Officers in charge who helped ready those Reservists, the family members who provided emotional strength while enduring separations, and the employers who supported mobilized reservists. I encourage reservists to nominate exceptionally supportive employers for the various Employer Support of The Guard and Reserve Award Programs described at www.esgr.mil and www.freedomaward.mil . *Bravo Zulu* to all.
3. Program Direction. Admiral Papp announced his new Reserve Policy Statement (available at www.uscg.mil/seniorleadership in the Policy Statements tab), which directs strategic action to ensure the Coast Guard Reserve remains a flexible, responsive operational force that can mobilize personnel with critical competencies to support the roles of Maritime Homeland Security, National Defense, and Domestic Disaster Operations. The Reserve Program is developing a "Reserve Force 2020" strategic plan intended to steady the Reserve Force as we learn and move forward after the challenges of Deepwater Horizon. Among the elements of our management plan most relevant to Reservists in the field are:
 - a. Growth. During Deepwater Horizon, demand for reserve personnel strained the available force. This strain is mostly attributable to the fact that only about 40 percent of reservists are available for domestic mobilization at any given time because of overseas contingency operations, IADT, long term ADOS, dwell time requirements, and other constraints. To ease this strain for future



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Operations, the reserve program is working to restore the reserve Force back to its funded strength of 8,100 personnel and to establish future staffing levels based on force requirements defined by the Deputy Commandants for operations and mission support.

- b. Concept of employment. The reserve program is developing guidance that will enable reservists and their commands to understand what skills and competencies they are expected to attain, how to attain them through standardized training and augmentation, and how they may expect to be employed when mobilized for specific contingencies.
 - c. Mobilization and de-mobilization processes. As the first large-scale mobilization since the Coast Guard's recent modernization re-organization, Deepwater Horizon revealed the need for more clearly defined mobilization processes and responsibilities. The reserve program is establishing a working group to address this need and ensure trained teams are ready to execute validated mobilization plans in future contingencies.
 - d. Reserve Force Readiness System (RFRS). Because SELRES personnel are integrated into active component units, the challenge of maintaining proficiency and readiness through a combination of training and augmentation is an essential command responsibility. Deepwater Horizon confirmed the value of having full-time reserve program expertise embedded in Districts and Sectors to fulfill this responsibility. The Reserve Program remains committed to sustaining and maturing the RFRS concept.
4. Deepwater Horizon showcased the strength and value of the Reserve Force and also provided visibility of areas where we have opportunity to improve. This is an All Hands on Deck Total Force Effort from Commands down to individual reservists. Now is the time for us to unify our efforts and steady our course toward developing the Reserve Force that will be ready to meet all future demands. *Semper Paratus.*

B. OPERATIONAL TASKING (OPTASK) DIVERSITY FY2010 SITREP THREE Vice Admiral John Currier, Chief Of Staff

1. In Jan 2010, Commander Atlantic Area (LANTAREA), Commander Pacific Area (PACAREA), the Deputy Commandant For Operations (DCO), and the Coast Guard Chief Of Staff (future DCMS) developed diversity action plans relevant to their organizational focus in an effort to optimize workforce readiness and meet

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- the maritime challenges of the 21st century. The resultant plans identify action items that will help the Coast Guard achieve its strategic diversity goals.
2. OPTASK diversity requires that quarterly progress reports and updates be submitted to COMDT (cg-1). As a follow-on, the following updates are provided to outline the progress and initiatives that have been accomplished in the last quarter.
 3. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE LAST 90 DAYS:
 - a. The Senior Executive Leadership Equal Opportunity Seminar (SELEOS) was held in September. SELEOS is tailored to assist Flag Officers, Senior Executives and Command Master Chiefs fulfill a Commandant mandate to bring awareness to the issues of Civil Rights, Military Equal Opportunity, Civilian Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity.
 - b. Senior leadership continued to establish numerous Flag and SES-level partnerships with Minority Serving Institutions (MSIS). The Coast Guard currently has over 20 formal partnerships with MSIS which enhance the services outreach efforts in attracting highly qualified students, particularly in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines.
 - c. Coast Guard members participated in the 2010 Academywomen Leadership Symposium. As part of the program, Coast Guard Academy Cadets and Officers were provided invaluable opportunities to meet senior female service officers attend numerous professional development seminars and meet with ADM Papp and RDML Thomas, Director of Response Policy, COMDT (CG-53).
 - d. The Diversity Outreach Board, consisting of 20 members representing the services major outreach components, met to coordinate efforts for the upcoming year. Such collaboration is essential in order to maximize the effectiveness of both fiscal and personnel resources, identify outreach gaps and ensure the greatest return on investment towards achieving a diverse total workforce.
 - e. The Diversity Staff began a thorough review of the Coast Guard Diversity Strategic Plan to identify and update goals and objectives. Based on accomplishments that have occurred over the last year, the revised plan will provide updated guidance and direction allowing units to implement and align with diversity initiatives.



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4. A service-level summary of the LANTAREA, PACAREA, DCO, and CCS FUTURE DCMS) Diversity Action Plans can be found on the Office of Diversity website at www.uscg.mil/diversity/resources.asp.

C. COMMANDANTS VETERANS DAY MESSAGE

ADM Robert Papp, Commandant

1. Veterans Day is the national holiday when we honor and thank our Veterans - past and present - for their service. It's a day to honor our profession. Those of us not on watch have the choice to take Veterans Day off; however, we must always remember that we only have this choice because of our veterans heroic service. Many of them had no choice - they had to go to war.
2. Our nation owes its existence to the generations of Americans who have fought and died, and who continue to fight and die - or suffer physical and mental wounds - defending our freedoms. It is a debt that can not truly be paid. What we can do - what we must do - is to use this occasion to show our gratitude by honoring their service.
3. This is our chosen profession. This is who we are. This is what we do. It also makes us unique. Our nations all-volunteer 2.4 million active duty and reservists, in a country of over 300 million, represents less than 1 percent of the American population. Our chosen profession has become something that few other people choose to do. In honoring those who went before us, we reinforce to their families and loved ones the significance of their sacrifices, and the gratitude we as a nation have for their commitment to something larger than themselves.
4. I encourage those of you not standing the watch to attend a local Veterans Day ceremony or parade or find some other meaningful way to honor those who serve, remember those who have served, and to humbly say Thank You.
5. I, along with Master Chief Leavitt and our wives, will visit Arlington National Cemetery to attend the national Veterans Day Service at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, followed by a service at the Coast Guard War Memorial. We hope to see many of our shipmates in attendance - you are all welcome to join us.
6. For those of you standing the watch, protecting our homeland, or supporting our sister services in the global war on terror, thank you. You exemplify the very best of what it means to be Coast Guardsmen, and I am proud to share in the privilege of defending our freedoms.

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7. Thank you to the men and women of the United States Coast Guard -past and present - for your selfless service. *Semper Paratus.*

D. 235TH BIRTHDAY OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Bob Papp, Commandant, United States Coast Guard

1. On behalf of the men and women of the United States Coast Guard, I am honored to extend birthday greetings to the United States Marine Corps on the 235th Anniversary of your founding.
2. On November 10, 1775, the Continental Congress passed a resolution creating two battalions of Marines to serve as landing forces for its fleet. This marked the birth of the United States Marine Corps. Since then, Marines have continually sacrificed to ensure the freedoms we enjoy today: from the 1805 battle of Derne where Marines seized victory from the Barbary pirates (the first such engagement of U.S. forces overseas), to today's operations in the mountains of Afghanistan.
3. This summer, in the Gulf of Aden, elements of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit facilitated the capture of 9 suspected pirates, securing the safe rescue of 11 crew members from the Motor Vessel *Magellan Star*. Members of Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team South were proud to assist, following in the second wave to handle enforcement activities after the initial takedown. Today, Marines and supporting Coast Guardsmen are playing a key role in securing freedom on the high seas and proving they are a formidable team.
4. The Marine Corps has also advanced the humanitarian aspects of U.S. operations. Following this year's earthquake in Haiti, Marines landed within days to deliver relief supplies and provide medical aid to the citizens of Leogane, Haiti. Marines of the 22nd expeditionary unit worked around the clock to deliver 550,000 bottles of water, 18,000 lbs of medical supplies, and more than one million disaster and relief rations.
5. Since our own founding in 1790, the Coast Guard has served alongside our fellow armed services on battle fronts around the world, but our bond with the Marines is unique. One of the Coast Guard's greatest heroes and only Medal Of Honor Recipient, Signalmen First Class Douglas A. Munro, died fighting alongside the Marines at Guadalcanal. Today, the Marine Corps honors Douglas Munro with an anti-terrorism training facility named in his memory. His bravery and sacrifice is our shared heritage.



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6. Your selfless service is cherished by all Americans. You are *Semper Fi*. We wish you continued success and are honored to serve alongside you. *Semper Paratus*.

E. **CHDIRAUX FINAL ACTION ON NATIONAL BOARD RECOM.** Chief Director Final Action On National Board Recommendations

1. At the 2010 Auxiliary National Conference this past August, four recommendations were placed before the National Board for vote. The following summarizes the recommendations, the vote of the National Board, and the Chief Director's final action:

- a. Recommendation: Make the following changes to Auxiliary unit standing rules regarding elections:

- (1) Allow for a candidate who has submitted a Letter-of-Intent, and has been vetted as eligible for that office, to not necessarily be present for the election to be elected.
- (2) Require a nomination from the floor to have a second.
- (3) Require the candidate be present when nominated from the floor, and to answer in the affirmative two questions asked by the presiding officer; "Do you accept the nomination?", and, "Will you serve if elected?"
- (4) Eliminate self-nomination from the floor.

National Board vote: For.

Chief Director final action: Concur and approved.

- b. Recommendation: Create a Coast Guard Auxiliary C-school for the Auxiliary Chef (AUXCHEF) program to train Auxiliarists to serve as Auxiliary Chefs and develop other trainers.

National Board vote: For.

Chief Director final action: Non-concur and disapproved.

A Coast Guard Auxiliary C-school is only created after thorough, lengthy, and costly examination of its need and projected cost-effectiveness. Even after such examination, there is no guarantee that the school will be created.

Moreover, the AUXCHEF program, by its basic nature, lends itself to clearly identifiable Coast Guard units that will benefit from trained Auxiliarists.

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In effect, Auxiliarists should only undergo AUXCHEF training if specific Coast Guard units for them to support have been clearly identified in advance. Those units can and should be approached for funding, as needed, to support the Auxiliarists who plan to support them.

- c. Recommendation: Modify the eligibility requirements by which an Auxiliarist may be awarded the Operations Program ribbon so as to include telecommunications qualification and service, as well as qualification as an Auxiliary Flight Examiner (similar to Auxiliary Qualification Examiners). Specifically, Auxiliarists designated by the regional Director of Auxiliary as Auxiliary Watchstanders according to District requirements, would be authorized to wear the Operations Program ribbon. Auxiliarists holding the Auxiliary Telecommunications Operator (TCO) qualification or who have qualified as AUXCOM prior to August 1, 2008, would be authorized to wear the Operations Program ribbon after performing and reporting a minimum of 24 hours mission time (7030 form code 20B). The "E" device would also be authorized to be worn on the ribbon by Auxiliarists who are currently appointed, or have been appointed, as a Qualification Examiner (QE) or Flight Examiner (FE).

National Board vote: For.

Chief Director final action: Concur with two modifications, effective immediately.

The Operations Program ribbon recognizes the achievement of qualification in operational mission disciplines. The additional requirement for a specific number of hours of activity for those who have achieved TCO or AUXCOM is unnecessary in its application, and is therefore eliminated. Additionally, the achievement of designation as Auxiliary Interpreter (Level A) had been previously recognized as appropriate for inclusion in the Operations Program ribbon eligibility criteria. Section 11.A.14.a. of the Auxiliary Manual is amended as follows and will be so included in its next update:

"This ribbon recognizes qualifications in the various operations program areas. Auxiliarists who qualify as an Auxiliary boat or air crew member, air observer, Aton verifier, Coast Guard watchstander, Coast Guard boat crewman, Coast Guard boat engineer, or Auxiliary interpreter (Level A) may wear the Operations Program ribbon. Watchstanders and boat engineers are defined as Auxiliarists who have been designated in writing by a Coast Guard unit, or the Director, as qualified in that position. Auxiliarists designated by the Director as Auxiliary watchstanders according to District requirements may also wear the Operations Program ribbon. Additionally, Auxiliarists holding the Auxiliary Telecommunications Operator (TCO) qualification or who have qualified as

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AUXCOM prior to August 1, 2008, are authorized to wear the Operations Program ribbon. Auxiliarists show multiple qualifications by adding 3/16-inch bronze or silver stars. The "E" device is authorized to be worn on the Auxiliary Operations Program ribbon by Auxiliarists who are currently appointed, or have been appointed, as a Qualification Examiner (QE) or Flight Examiner (FE). No miniature "E" device for miniature medals is authorized."

- d. Recommendation: Provide formal recognition to an Auxiliarist who performs 25 hours of service within the first calendar year of achieving Basically Qualified (BQ) membership status. Such recognition would be in the form of a ribbon based upon the Auxiliary Flotilla Member Training Achievement Ribbon.

National Board vote: For.

Chief Director final action: Non-concur and disapproved.

Items worn on the uniform like office insignia, devices, and particularly personal award ribbons, are awarded to recognize significant personal achievement in terms of both time and effort. Several Auxiliary ribbons already and appropriately serve this purpose, including the Sustained Auxiliary Service Ribbon, the Member Service Ribbon, the Annual Performance Service Ribbons, and the Qualification Ribbons. The proposed ribbon does not meet this threshold. Moreover, there are other forms of recognition that are more fitting for the purpose, such as unit certificates, mention in newsletters and web sites, and forum recognition at unit meetings. Auxiliary units have the discretion to exercise these alternatives as they see fit, and they are strongly encouraged to consider and apply them as part of their comprehensive recognition programs.

F. OUR RESPONSE TO THE LATEST TERRORIST THREAT

Secretary Janet Napolitano, Homeland Security

As we saw yesterday, terrorists remain determined to test our defenses and conduct attacks against the United States. The work that our Department does to protect the Nation has never been as important.

In response to this latest threat, DHS has put in place additional aviation and cargo screening measures, and is working closely with our Federal, state, local, international and private sector partners to identify suspicious individuals and cargo packages.



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We are also reiterating the need for continued awareness and vigilance on the part of the public, state, local, tribal and territorial law enforcement, and the men and women of DHS. As always, we are encouraging all Americans to report any suspicious activity to authorities.

Since we first learned of the threat emanating from Yemen late on Thursday, DHS employees have responded with dedication, skill and professionalism. You have helped to disrupt what could have been a deadly attack against the U.S. and our allies. We must continue to lean forward into this important work. I want to share my personal thanks for your service, and for all you do every day to keep our Nation safe and secure.

G. 2010 HOLIDAY GREETINGS

Admiral Bob and Linda Papp

In the midst of this holiday season, Linda and I want to take a moment to send our wholehearted thanks to you and your families.

Each and every day you provide for the safety, security, and stewardship of our nation and its waters. Your outstanding work over the past year, whether active duty, reserve, civilian or auxiliary, once again showcased the value of our small service. In Haiti, you were first on-scene to provide humanitarian assistance in the wake of a devastating earthquake, and you have led, and continue to lead, the extraordinary clean-up and oversight of the deepwater horizon oil spill response. We also remember our retirees, who continue to support us and still serve as members of the coast guard family. This year, our family also experienced the painful loss of shipmates. We remember them. We miss them. We will never forget them.

We face many challenges in the new year. Indeed, there is much important work to be done-but my faith in your ability to complete our challenging maritime missions has never been stronger. For now, I encourage you to enjoy the warmth of the holiday season. Rest, relax and spend time with your families, friends and shipmates. As you enjoy the company of your loved ones, remember our coast guardsmen, and all the men and women serving in our armed forces throughout the world, who are proudly standing watch, providing safety, security and peace for this holiday season.

You are an exceptional group of individuals and I cannot express how thankful I am to serve with you. During this holiday season, and for the many that will follow, we will continue to faithfully serve. This is our chosen profession. This is our way. This is what we do. We are the men and women of The United States Coast Guard, past and present.

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Stand a taut watch, *Semper Paratus* and happy holidays.

H. THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT

Radm Mark Tedesco, Director Health, Safety, and Work-Life

1. This year The Great American Smokeout will take place on Nov 18. The purpose of the event is to set aside a day to help people quit using tobacco and nicotine products for at least one day with the hope that they will quit completely.
2. The Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Directorate encourages all current tobacco and nicotine users to quit and suggests using the following support options to increase their success in quitting.
 - a. Contact your primary care manager for suggestions on how to quit and information on tobacco cessation resources, including possible medications.
 - b. Call the stop tobacco use hot line at 1-800-227-2345. There are counselors waiting in all 50 states to give counseling on ways to help you succeed.
 - c. Go to the on-line site www.ucanquit2.org. This site offers On-line chat with counselors for suggestions to help you quit.
 - d. Call your HSWL Field Office Health Promotion Manager (HPM) for guidance and local resources to help you quit at 1-800-872-4957.
3. Commands are encouraged to plan tobacco awareness activities such as the Adopt A Smoker/Chewer program. Regional HPMS can assist in developing an action plan.
4. Breaking the tobacco nicotine habit is challenging and individuals often require numerous quit attempts before achieving life long freedom from tobacco. I applaud those who make this attempt and urge commands to support their efforts. Your success will be rewarded in a healthier life for you and those around you.
5. For questions concerning CG tobacco policies, refer to contact Mr. Tim Merrell, in COMDT (CG-1111), 202-475-5146 or timothy.m.merrell@uscg.mil.
- 6.

I. 235TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAVY CHAPLAIN CORPS

Admiral Bob Papp, Commandant

1. The men and women of the United States Coast Guard wish to extend a happy birthday to the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps, which celebrates The Chaplain Corps has been a force multiplier to The Coast Guard.

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2. Since 1929, when the first chaplain was assigned to our service. Today, a diverse corps of 49 active and reserve chaplains supports the Coast Guard, providing innovative and timely spiritual and pastoral care to the entire Coast Guard family, enhancing our mission readiness.
3. This year, our chaplains continued to stand alongside our people and our families, providing support, hope, and spiritual encouragement wherever and whenever we needed them. They both deployed with us to the trying frontlines of the Haiti earthquake response and were there for us on the piers and in the hangers with our loved ones when we returned home.
4. The devotion to duty of our chaplains epitomizes true servant leadership.
5. On this special occasion of their 235th birthday, please thank our chaplains for their faithful and dedicated service to our coast guard and nation.

J. EASY RADIO CHECKS TO MAKE SURE YOUR RADIO WORKS BEFORE VENTURING OUT ON THE WATER

Ken Englert, Boating Magazine



The time to find out if your VHF radio is working is *before* you leave the dock. In the absence of a pro, you can perform a health check on the radio to confirm that it's fit for sea duty. Here are some simple tips.

There are two types of tests that should be performed, an installation check and an operational check. Both can be done in minutes. A professional installation check is suggested once a year, preferably at the beginning of the boating season.

- **Voltage Test** Check for any voltage drop, which can rob your radio of performance. Measure the voltage at the terminals where the VHF connects to the 12-volt system near the helm, while a helper keys the transmit button on the microphone to load the circuit. The closer the reading is to 12 volts, the better — it may even be a few 10ths higher; any reading below nine volts requires servicing the circuit. (A voltmeter can be purchased for as little as \$20 at Radio Shack and is simple to use).

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- **Antenna Check** Look for any cracks, which can lead to water intrusion, appearing along the antenna's length. Identify and correct any sharp bends or crushed sections of the antenna cable, since these can reduce transmission power. The antenna connector at the back of the radio is a frequent cause of radio failure. Confirm that it is free from corrosion and without tension from a tightly stretched antenna cable.
- **Air Check** If you can get on the air to radio check with another boat or base station at a reasonable distance away (not from a nearby boat on the same dock), you can rest assured the VHF is ready for duty. But if no one is available for a live radio check, you need to check the radio's three key operating functions: transmission, modulation and reception.
- **Transmission Test** One trick to see if your radio is transmitting is to keep an eye on the ammeter function of your test meter. If your boat is equipped with an ammeter, you can use that too, though most boats aren't equipped with this helpful gauge. In the receive mode, your radio should read around one amp of current. When you transmit on high power, the ammeter should kick up to about five or more amps. This is a fair indication that the radio is transmitting at full power.
- **Reception Test** Confirm your radio's "hearing ability" by tuning to a 24-hour weather broadcast station that is 25 or more miles away. Reception indicates your receiver is probably OK. Alternatively, tune to a local weather channel, remove the antenna cable from the radio and touch the tip of a narrow screwdriver blade or car key to the center conductor of the radio's antenna connector. If you can hear a local weather station with such a tiny antenna, the radio should be receiving properly. **Warning:** *Do not* key the mike while the antenna is disconnected or you'll fry your set.
- **Modulation Test** You may be transmitting 25 watts of power, but if your voice doesn't "modulate," or vary the radio's signal, no one will hear your message. A quick test is to switch to one watt, or low power, and monitor yourself on a handheld. You may have to turn the volume down or have someone take the portable VHF down the dock to prevent "squealing" due to signal overload. If your voice is understood, the radio is modulating OK.
- **Handy Radio Check Meter** One of my favorite means to test a VHF is Shakespeare's ART-3 radio/antenna tester (\$125). It's palm-size and can easily be connected between a VHF and antenna as a kind of "stethoscope" to monitor and



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- indicate the radio's power output and the efficiency of the antenna and to evaluate reception as well. The ART-3 will give you a radio check every time you use the radio!
- **Band-Aid Cures** If the radio starts to have problems when you're away from the dock, here are a couple of curative tips you can use to help remedy the situation.
 - **Bad-Mike Fix:** If the radio doesn't transmit or you get reports from nearby boaters that they can't hear you or that you are cutting in and out, the microphone cable may be at fault. While listening on a handheld VHF, stretch and manipulate the mike cable to see if you can pinpoint an intermittent wire in the cable. If found, twist or fold the cable to find a position where the microphone will work and then wrap electrical tape or a zip tie around the cable to maintain that position.
 - **Antenna and Cable Cure:** If you can make contact only with nearby boats, you may have an antenna or cable problem. Keep a backup antenna stowed on board as insurance. A short sailboat antenna will do with an appropriate length of coaxial cable. You can temporarily secure the antenna to a side rail with tape or an antenna rail mount to get you operational.
 - **Voltage Recovery:** Radio failure due to loss of voltage is common. Know where the in-line fuse is located and keep spare fuses handy. Loose connections and corrosion can cause radio failure. Cleaning and tightening the radio's power cable connections can often restore normal operation.

K. Winterizing Rules for Ethanol

Randy Vance , Boating Magazine



The debate began innocently enough. Pierce Hoover, editor of *Motor Boating*, asked my opinion on winterizing procedures with ethanol-extended gasoline — a fuel much more susceptible to deterioration during storage.



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Simple, right? Stabilize the fuel, top off the tank, run it through the fuel system, fog the cylinders, change the oil and coolant (on a closed-cooled engine) and cross your fingers until spring.

To stir things up Pierce also asked Kevin Falvey, our senior technical editor, his advice. Kevin's procedure was markedly different. He runs the tank close to empty before storage. In the friendly wrestling match that ensued, Kevin sent me the Mercruiser maintenance manual — straight from the shoulder. It supported his position of running the tank low for storage so that, if the gas is contaminated by condensation, there is less fuel to dispose of. And moisture contamination is always a risk as long as fuel tanks are open to the atmosphere.

So I fired off an e-mail to Evinrude, Yamaha and the makers of two popular fuel stabilizers, Sta-bil and Star brite Star-Tron.

“Yamaha's official position is to stabilize the fuel,” said Martin Peters, spokesman for the company. “[We] recommend our Fuel Stabilizer & Conditioner to be run through the entire fuel system, and then store the tank seven-eighths full to leave room for expansion of fuel from ambient temperatures.”

But Star brite and Sta-bil advise we go for full. “In many places the local fire marshal requires full tanks because it minimizes the formation of volatile fumes in the tank and lowers risk of fire,” said Star brite vice president Bill Lindsey. He cited statements made by Fort Lauderdale, Florida, area marshals.

OK, so Evinrude can settle this question, can't it? Yeah, right.

“It's a debate that will never be settled,” said Larry Koschak, Evinrude's product manager. “The different regions and regulations do not allow a pat answer. Cold environments slow the deterioration process, while hotter climates accelerate the deterioration of fuel. Some storage facilities do not want full fuel tanks. For me, I store whatever fuel is left in the tank. This year it was one-half tank — 12 gallons. I fill the tank before our first outing, so I have fresh fuel as much as the tank will allow.”

I guess that settles it. Or not.