

DEPOE BAY BAR HAZARDS

CROSSING THE BAR

The bar is the area where the deep waters of the Pacific Ocean meet with the shallower waters near the mouth of the river.

Most accidents and deaths that occur on coastal bars are from capsizing.

Coastal bars may be closed to recreational boats when conditions on the bar are hazardous. Failure to comply with the closure may result in voyage termination, and civil and/or criminal penalties. The regulations are enforced by Coast Guard boarding teams.

Improper loading and/or overloading are major causes of capsizing. Improper/overloaded boats have less stability and less freeboard, which can allow seas to break into the vessel, causing the boat to become even less stable.

Boats are more likely to capsize when crossing the bar from the ocean because the seas are on the stern and the boater may have less control over the vessel.

Boaters must make sure the bar is safe prior to crossing. Check with other boaters or the Coast Guard to find out the condition of the bar.

If you are caught on a rough bar running in...

- Make sure everybody aboard is wearing a personal flotation device.
- Keep the boat square before the seas.
- Keep the boat on the back of the swell. Ride the swell and stay clear of the following wave.

Avoid sudden weight shifts from passengers or gear moving around in the boat. If possible, have passengers lie down as near the centerline of the boat as possible.

Do not allow the waves to catch your boat on the side (beam). This condition is called broaching, and can easily result in capsizing.

TIDES

Tides are the vertical rise and fall of the water and tidal current is the horizontal flow of the water. There are roughly four tides each day in the Pacific Northwest. Tidal movement toward the shore or upstream is the flood current. Movement away from the shore or downstream is the ebb current. The period between the two is known as slack water. Tidal currents may gain tremendous velocity, particularly when the ebb current is augmented by river runoff.

BAR AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

Listen to the local broadcast on 1610 AM

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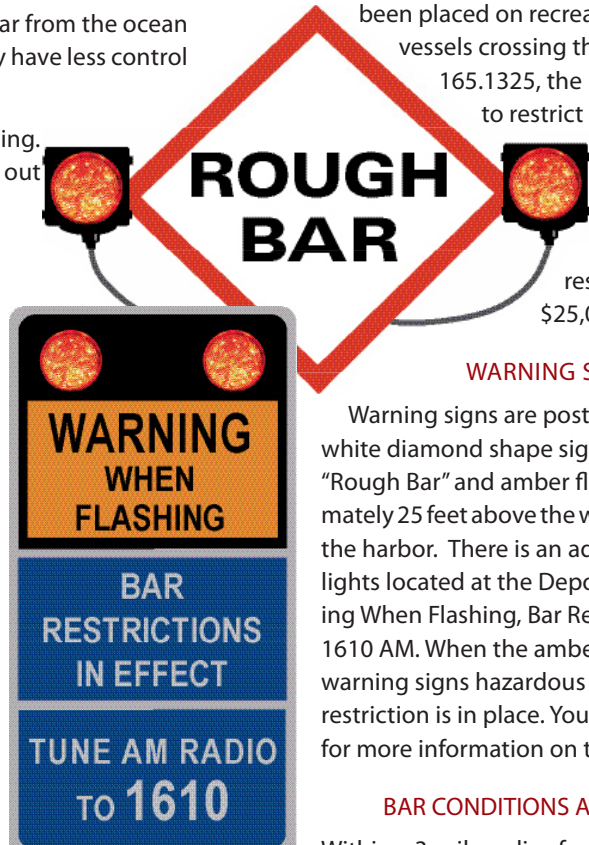
It is extremely dangerous to get caught on the bar during strong ebb current. Even on days that are relatively calm, fast moving ebb can create bar conditions that are too rough for small craft.

- Always know the stage of the tide!
- Avoid getting caught on the bar during an ebb tide.

It is normally best to cross the bar during slack water or on a flood tide, when the seas are normally calmest.

REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS

The Coast Guard has established a Regulated Navigation Area. If the yellow lights on this sign are flashing, indicating a restriction has been placed on recreational and uninspected passenger vessels crossing the bar. In accordance with 33 CFR 165.1325, the U.S. Coast Guard has the authority to restrict all recreational and uninspected passenger vessels from crossing the bar when hazardous conditions exist. Failing to comply with posted bar restrictions may result in a maximum civil penalty of \$25,000.00.



WARNING SIGN LOCATIONS

Warning signs are posted in two locations in the port. A white diamond shape sign with orange border indicating "Rough Bar" and amber flashing lights is located approximately 25 feet above the water, visible on northwest corner of the harbor. There is an additional warning sign with amber lights located at the Depoe Bay boat ramp that read: Warning When Flashing, Bar Restrictions in Effect, Tune to 1610 AM. When the amber lights are flashing on any of the warning signs hazardous conditions are present and a bar restriction is in place. You are directed to listen to 1610 AM for more information on the restriction.

BAR CONDITIONS AND OBSERVATION REPORTS

Within a 3-mile radius from the Coast Guard station a continual broadcast is transmitted on radio station 1610 AM with the latest bar conditions observation, bar restrictions, and local weather.

You can also access current bar conditions and restriction on your smart phone or hand held device by going to, <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pqr/marine/BarObs.php>.



EMERGENCIES

VHF-FM Radio: Channel 16

If in distress (threatened by grave and imminent danger):

1. Make sure radio is on
2. Select Channel 16
3. Press/hold the transmit button
4. Speak slowly, and clearly say: MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
5. Give the following information:
 - Vessel Name and/or Description
 - Nature of Emergency
 - Position and/or Location
 - Number of People Aboard
6. Release the Transmit Button
7. Wait for 10 seconds – If no response, repeat "Mayday" call. If not in immediate danger, switch to CH 22 and follow the same steps as above, except do not use the word "MAYDAY."

Make Sure Everyone is Wearing a Life Jacket!

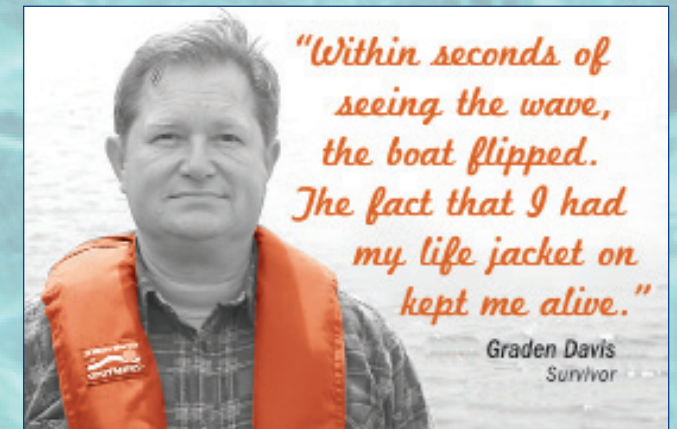
Phone 911. Tell the operator that you have a marine emergency. Be ready to provide the same information required in item number 5 of the mayday call.



Coast Guard Stations:
Depoe Bay
Depoe Bay, OR
(541) 765-2124

BOATING SAFETY TIPS

- Check Weather, Tide, and Bar Conditions – The latest information can be heard on 1610 AM
- File a Float Plan With Friends/Relatives
- Don't Overload Your Boat
- Wear Your Life Jacket
- Carry Flares and a VHF-FM Radio
- Stay Well Clear of Commercial Vessels
- Have Anchor With Adequate Line
- Boat Sober

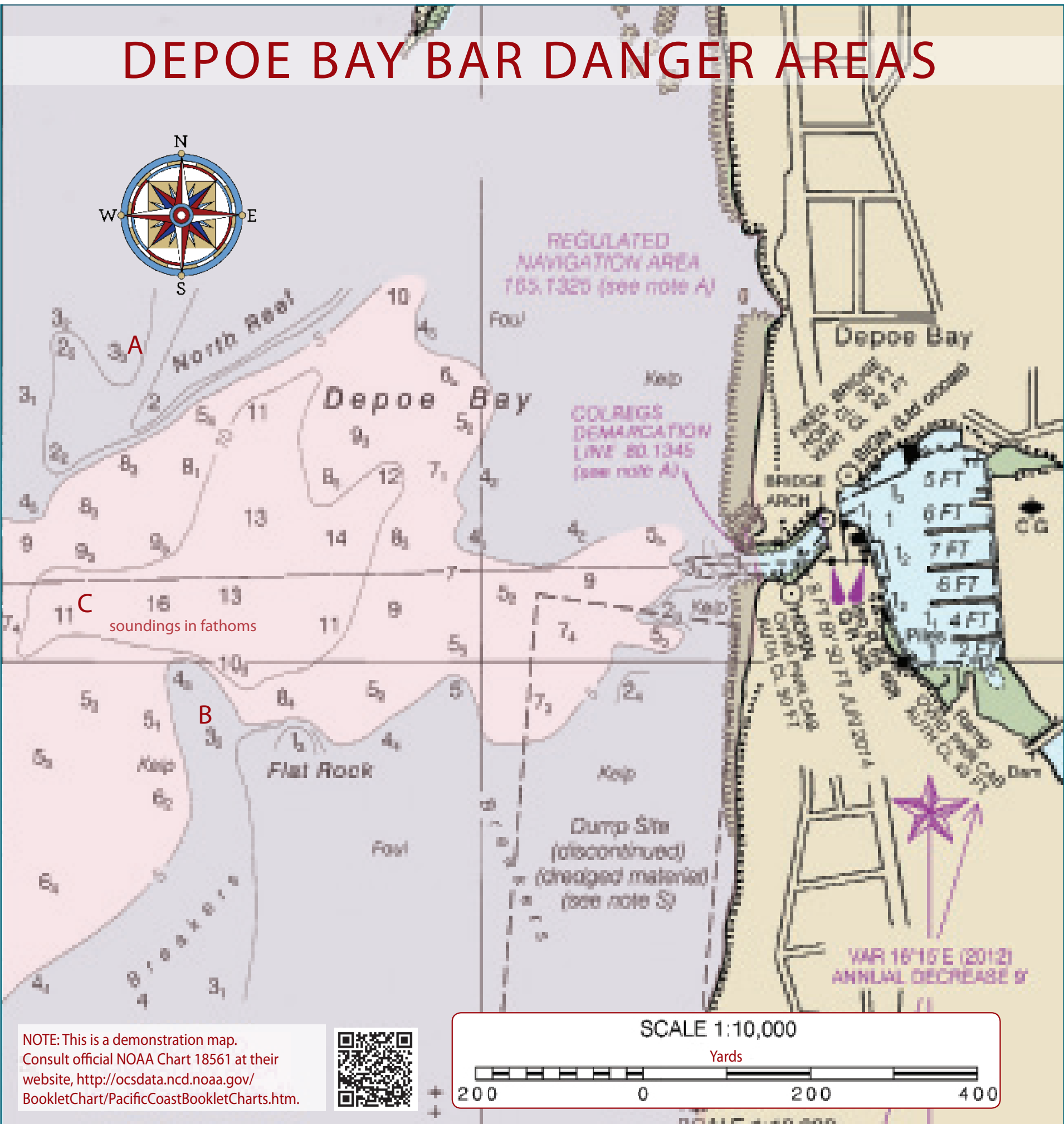


CROSSING THE DEPOE BAY BAR

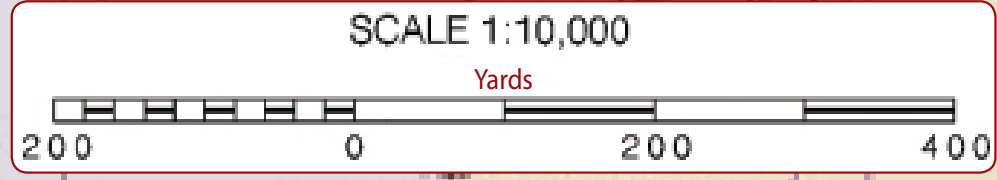


More Boating Safety Information: www.uscgboating.org and www.boatoregon.com
Boating Class and Vessel Safety Check Information: www.uscgaux.org/~130/,
www.usps.org or 1-800-336-BOAT (2628) (class information only)

DEPOE BAY BAR DANGER AREAS



NOTE: This is a demonstration map. Consult official NOAA Chart 18561 at their website, <http://ocsddata.ncd.noaa.gov/BookletChart/PacificCoastBookletCharts.htm>.



A. North reef. Once a boat has cleared the entrance, any waters to the north are hazardous until Depoe Bay entrance lighted bell buoy 2 is reached. The sea breaks from the northwest and southwest at the same time, so this area must be avoided at all times.

B. South reef. Better known as "Flat Rock," this area lies just south of the channel. Breakers are almost always present. Boats coming from the south should never use this area as a short cut to the channel. This area should be avoided at all times.

C. Channel from Depoe Bay entrance lighted Bell Buoy 2 inbound (approximately 100 yards). The passage into and out of Depoe Bay is unusually short and difficult. The Coast Guard recommends studying it before attempting to operate a boat in it. Because the north and south reefs are so close to the channel, this area sometimes becomes very hazardous. During adverse conditions, breakers from the north reef will cross the channel and run into the entrance. When this condition exists, it is better to stand by at the entrance buoy until the Coast Guard advises it is safe to enter or is there to escort boats in. An important rule at Depoe Bay: Never fish between the entrance and Depoe Bay entrance lighted Bell Buoy 2.

Depoe Bay Channel. This Depoe Bay Channel has been widened from 35 feet to 50 feet to make passing less dangerous. Vertical clearance of the bridge is approximately 42 feet, depending on the height of the tide, and an average depth of 8 feet at mean low water. Under normal conditions, small craft can enter and leave the harbor with little difficulty however, even under good conditions, area between the breakwater and the bridge should be navigated with extreme caution. Forecasted conditions should be consulted prior to getting underway. Changes in wind and swell direction can cause conditions to rapidly deteriorate making any transit across the bar hazardous.

The channel "dog leg" under the bridge obstructs your ability to view other vessels entering and departing the bay. Local practice requires vessels to make a broadcast on VHF channel 80 indicating their intention prior to leaving or entering the bay. The Coast Guard Station monitors VHF FM Channel 80.

Under adverse conditions, only mariners thoroughly familiar with the channel should attempt to enter this harbor. For night navigation the Depoe Bay entrance is illuminated. It should NOT be entered at night unless the boat operator is well acquainted with the channel entrance and range lights.



Warning: Safe navigation is the responsibility of the operator of each vessel. The Coast Guard and NOAA provide information to assist mariners in navigating safely. The information is updated every four hours or when local bar conditions and or restrictions change. The information provided reflects conditions at the time the bar was observed and may not reflect current conditions. Bar conditions are subject to change without notice. This report should NOT be used as the sole source of information when making a decision to cross the bar. Mariners are advised to use all means available to safely reevaluate bar conditions and risk before crossing the bar.

