

Wexford Harbour

Yachting Guide

Navigation

This document supersedes all previous editions.

Approvals:

Yacht Club Committee April, 2015

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#	Date	Section	Revision
1	6.5.2015	1.5.2/1.6.1	Change of language to reflect new conditions
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Wexford Yacht Club Policies and Procedures

1. Navigation

The Wexford Plantation Yacht Club maintains a locked harbor (“Lock”) with its own tide and current system. The winding waterways present potential problems for captains. These regulations are intended to enhance the safety for everyone using the Harbor .

1.1 Coastguard Inland Navigation Rules:

All the rules contained in U.S. Coast Guard Navigation Rules (COMDTINST – M16672.2D) apply in the Harbor (download at: <http://Captains.uscg.mil/vtm/navrules/navrules.pdf>).

1.2 Harbor Approach Channel:

1.2.1 NOAA Chart 11516

Vessels navigating in Broad Creek to approach the Wexford Lock are advised to use NOAA Chart: 11516 (Ribaut Island, Skull Creek, South Carolina).

1.2.2 Harbor Entrance Coordinates:)

Coordinates: 80° 45' 40.7880" W and 32° 10' 41.1240" N, or
Longitude: -80.76133 and **Latitude** 32.17809 (decimal)

1.2.3 Approach Wexford via Broad Creek

Approach Broad Creek from the vicinity of the Harbor Town Marina entrance. Marks on the approach to and inside of Broad Creek are privately maintained and generally only mark shoals. Leave “G1” marking Calibogue Shoal well to port and “R2” to starboard. Parallel the row of private docks, to starboard on Calibogue Cay, about 100’ off, near the middle of the creek. Depths along this area should be 13’–20’ MLW. After passing the last dock, begin easing toward the port side of the channel and leave Buck Island to port and marker #4 to starboard. The channel has good center depth from the northeast tip of Buck Island, until it turns to starboard or eastward toward Palmetto Bay Marina.

Leave Palmetto Bay Marina to starboard about 100’–150’, pass under the Cross Island Bridge (clearance 65’ MLW). At night be especially careful of boats anchored near Palmetto Bay Marina. Depths at center creek in this area are 18’–20’ MLW.

The next marker to starboard is the entrance to the Wexford approach channel. It is a lighted day marker, number #2, flashing red every 4 seconds. To approach this channel stay 150’–200’ off of the marsh island between #6 and #2 and make a turn to starboard between #2 and day marker #1. Do not cut between these markers and the shore as there are submerged rocks along the shore. This area is marked by a sign reading “Danger Submerged Rocks”.

Between Markers #2 and #1 a cross current exists on a strong ebb or flood tide. Skippers should be aware of this current and use enough power to quickly cross this area. Leave the even numbered markers (red) to starboard, the odd (green) to port approaching the Lock. Between day markers #5 and #6 a turn is made to starboard to line up between day markers #7 and #8. After passing #7 a slow turn can be made to port to put #10 directly astern and #9 on the port side.

With #9 close to port and #10 dead astern you should be headed for the Lock with the approach dock to starboard. In addition to the approach channel there is also a turning basin extending for approximately 350’ in a southwest direction from day marker #10. This basin has a width of 40’ and a depth of 6’ MLW in February 2004. At the end of the channel is a day marker reading “Danger”. If this basin is used, be careful of shoaling after passing day marker #12 to starboard. Markers from #2 to the Lock & turning basin are equipped with reflective tape either green or red.

1.2.4 Channel Night Markers

Entering the channel from Broad Creek, leave red lit beacons to starboard (right) and green lit beacons to port (left). Note that all piles have red and green reflective tape on them, red on port and green on starboard piles.

1.2.5 Channel Day Markers

When entering the channel from Broad Creek, leave even numbered day markers (red) to starboard and odd markers (green) to port.

1.2.6 Channel Depth

The channel is dredged to about 8 feet at Mean Low Water. However shoaling occurs between dredging and captains are advised that the depth may be considerably less. Contact the harbor master on channel 14 when approaching for more up to date information.

1.2.7 Lock Entrance Currents

At low tide, whirlpool currents may be caused by water exiting the Lock gates. Captains must allow for this or wait until the currents subside. At high tide water entering the flushing pipes to the north of the entrance may cause a slight right to left current. Also note that when exiting the lock going into the harbor, near high tide water entering the Harbor through flushing pipes north of the Lock may circulate the water and cause a left to right cross current at the inner Lock gate.

1.3 Navigation in the Harbor:

1.3.1 Depth

Depth in the Harbor is kept above 8 feet, if there is a special circumstance where that depth is not the norm then a notification will be given to all interested parties.

1.3.2 Navigation Markers

No navigation markers are installed in the Harbor.

1.3.3 Bridges

No boat of any size may pass under any of the bridges within the Harbor because there is a large pipe under each bridge submerged at surface level. In addition rip-rap near each bridge extends out into the channel. Because of these hazards, each bridge is marked with a danger sign.

1.3.4 Safe Speed

Idle Speed is the only safe speed in the Harbor for both sailboats and power boats. The entire Harbor is a no-wake zone.

1.4 Tide and Current in the Harbor:

1.4.1 The Tidal Range

The tidal range in the Harbor is normally controlled between 6" - 18", usually a few inches below the bottom of the bulkhead cap. The tidal range in Broad Creek affects this control and the range may be exceeded due to extremely high or low tides.

1.5 Lock Regulations:

1.5.1 Operation

Only Wexford Staff may operate the Lock gates.

1.5.2 Notification

Captains must notify Wexford Harbour by radio – see *Communications* below – *prior* to entering the approach channel from Broad Creek and *wait to receive* the all clear from the Wexford staff. This procedure will avoid passing situations in the narrow approach channel or cutting in front of another vessel already waiting in Broad Creek. Approach speed should be “idle speed”. The Harbour staff is solely responsible for controlling the priority of lock entry and exit.

1.5.3 Approaching the Lock

Captains must proceed with caution. The amber light means the Lock is safe to enter and the doors are fully opened. The red light means the Lock doors are operating. When the doors are fully open, the red light goes off and the amber lights will flash.

1.5.4 Captain Responsibility

Each captain is responsible for navigating safely in and out of the Lock, the above light conditions must be obeyed unless given verbal instruction by the lock operator, it is also the captain's responsibility to use adequate fenders, and positioning of the vessel during the change in water level employing engines and/or dock-lines.

1.5.5 Dock Line Handling in the Lock

Never cleat dock lines in the Lock. Hold the lines and play them in or out as required. There are several recessed ladders on either side of the Lock. These are designed as a means of access and should not be used as a hand hold, as they may have slime or encrustations on them.

1.6 Communications about Lock Operations:

1.6.1 Use VHF Channel 14 only.

Channel 14 is designated by the FCC for port operations and is monitored by the Yacht Club. Use VHF-14 **only** to contact Wexford Harbour or another vessel in, or approaching, the Yacht Club or Lock, e.g., "Wexford Harbour" this is *Motivation* requesting a Lock-Out." You may also use channel 16 to hail the Harbour Center but upon acknowledgement from the Harbour Center they will request you to switch to channel 14.

1.6.2 Communicating at Night – or in an Emergency:

Between the hours of 5pm, winter, and 6pm Summer (from May 1st. till the first day after Labour day weekend), and 8am, call Wexford Security at 686-8818.

1.6.3 For Other than Port Operations,

Make contact on Channel 14 (or 16) and then switch to another channel.

1.7 Maintenance of an Unobstructed Channel

Anchoring is prohibited throughout the Harbor except in an emergency. Parallel rafting alongside docks is prohibited. Crab pots or fishing lines may not be placed in the channel.

1.7.1 Entering from Outside:

Contact the Harbour Master on Channel 14 as you pass under the cross Island bridge.

The Harbour master will notify if it is clear to enter the channel and that there are no vessels departing ahead of you. When give the all clear from the Harbour Master, approach the loch with caution and follow any directions the loch master deems necessary.

1.7.2 Characteristics of the Loch:

When the loch empties It creates eddy currents that can, if not taken into account push the vessel into one or the other side of the loch. The operator of the loch will give direction to the Captain as the level raises or lowers per the tide.

1.7.3 Exiting:

When the water level in the loch has completely equalized and the doors have fully opened the Captain may hand back the lines given him and transit the loch exercising due care.