



US COAST GUARD AUXILIARY LAKE NORMAN

How to interpret a National Weather Service forecast ••

Besides a PFD the next best thing to have equipped on your boat is a VHF-FM radio. On all models the National Weather Service reports can be picked up on the weather feature. These reports can offer a reasonably reliable and accurate forecast for your general area and general wind patterns. But to interpret them you must understand them~

Light and variable winds • 5 mph or less and shift directions frequently.

Small Craft Advisory • Winds up to 38 mph and a dangerous sea condition. (Most every recreational boaters vessel is considered a small craft)

Gale Warning• Winds ranging from 39 - 54 mph

Storm Warning• Winds that exceed 55 mph unless denoted with a hurricane.

Something to keep in mind is that speed of the wind not only is a punishing factor, so is pressure. A 5 mph wind exerts .1 pound per square foot of force. Likewise a 20 mph wind packs 1.6 pounds per square feet of force.