



Is Your Boat "Documented" - and Should She Be?



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All of us are familiar with registering our vessels with the State Department of Motor Vehicles. Like a car, DMV wants to know her horse-power, fuel type (gas or diesel) and the Hull Identification Number, or HIN#. This is the on-the-water equivalent of a car's VIN#. You are required to display, on each side of the bow, the state registration numbers, followed by the expiration sticker itself. But, is your boat eligible for documenting with the USCG, and, if so, should you? This is what this column is about.

Whither the HIN?

The HIN is the unique 12-digit identification number of the vessel. It is emblazoned on the starboard side of the transom, and it is, as you would expect, illegal to alter it, paint over it, obscure it or in any way make it seem like you're trying to make it look like a different HIN#! This number indicates the boat manufacturer, its serial number, and the month and year of production.

This one item is of critical importance during any vessel safety check or exam. If the HIN# on your state registration doesn't conform to the ves-

sel's physical HIN#, you would be required to resolve that immediately.

So Why "Document" the Vessel?

First, for the USCG to permit documenting the vessel, it must adhere to a certain formula for its "admeasure" - not what it weighs, but really what it can carry in cargo. Its "admeasure" must be at least equal to five net tons by the USCG formula. As a rule of thumb, boats less than 25' in length are unlikely to measure up. But, there is a simplified formula that the USCG provides (Form CG-5937, Application for Simplified Measurement) that you can access online (or email me below and I will send you the e.form) that can determine if the boat qualifies. She must be less than 79' to fit into the simplified window, but I expect that this isn't a problem for most of us!

Documentation numbers need to be permanently attached to a structural portion of the hull, and the vessels' name and home port need to be listed on the hull--usually the transom. Recreational vessels must have the name and hailing port listed in four inch letters. Commercial vessels must do the same, but they must also have the name on both sides of the bow.

So, if the boat is already registered with the state, why do skippers have their vessel federally documented - or registered with the US Coast Guard? Documentation has several advantages, but its primary uses are to provide a "paper trail" that establishes ownership of a vessel, and documentation is often necessary to travel overseas. Remember that HIN# discrepancy I postulated above? What if someone sold you a stolen boat...? Think about it...

Tons, Tonnes, and Tuns

Tons come in many shapes and sizes - short tons, long tons, metric tonnes, gross tons, net tons,

displacement tons, deadweight tons, register tons, US and international regulatory tons - and tuns. A tun, going back in history, was a wooden cask full of wine. To be precise, it had to hold four "hogsheads" of wine - which is 252 gallons. Vessels were measured and taxed by how many tuns of wine that they could transport. Guess that a tun of wine weighs..? About 2,200 pounds - and this is where it starts to get interesting or complicated, depending on how your brain works!

The "ton" we all learned about in school is 2,000 pounds. In maritime parlance, this is a "short ton", with a "long ton" being, yup, about 2,200 pounds. It is 2,240 pounds to be precise, or just about what a tun of wine weighs. Of course, most of the world is on the metric system, so a metric ton - or a tonne - is 2,205 pounds but, as best as I can determine, this is coincidentally about what a tun of wine weighs. The reason that they are so close is because the metric ton, or tonne for short, is the weight of 1,000 liters of fresh water - and wine is mostly fresh water! Displacement tons and deadweight tons can come in all three flavors - short, long and metric. Suffice it to say that it is complicated.

One last tidbit... Above, I referenced that tuns were used to measure and tax vessels "back in the day" of sailing ships and bootleggers. The agency that Alexander Hamilton created to police these policies on US waters was the Revenue Cutter Service. This service became, over the centuries, what we now know as the United States Coast Guard.

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources Department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you "get in this thing..."

Hull Identification Numbers (HIN)

Example: **ACBF0930A686**

ACB	F0930	A6	86
Manufacturer's ID Code	Production or Serial #	Month, Year of Production	Model Year

Key to Month of Production:
 A=January
 B=February
 C=March
 D=April
 E=May
 F=June
 G=July
 H=August
 J=September
 K=October
 L=November

Tides for Moriches Inlet starting with August 8, 2012

Day	High/Low	Tide Time	Height Feet	Sunrise/Sunset	Moon Time	% Moon Visible
Wed. 8	Low	5:31 AM	0.4	5:55 AM	Set 12:40 PM	68
8	High	12:16 PM	3.0	7:58 PM	Rise 11:07 PM	
8	Low	6:20 PM	0.7			
Thur. 9	High	12:36 AM	2.7	5:56 AM	Set 1:38 PM	58
9	Low	6:17 AM	0.5	7:57 PM	Rise 11:43 PM	
9	High	1:01 PM	2.9			
9	Low	7:22 PM	0.8			
Fri. 10	High	1:26 AM	2.5	5:57 AM	Set 2:33 PM	49
10	Low	7:12 AM	0.7	7:55 PM		
10	High	1:48 PM	2.9			
10	Low	8:25 PM	0.8			
Sat. 11	High	2:18 AM	2.5	5:58 AM	Rise 12:24 AM	39
11	Low	8:14 AM	0.7	7:54 PM	Set 3:26 PM	
11	High	2:39 PM	2.9			
11	Low	9:22 PM	0.7			
Sun. 12	High	3:14 AM	2.4	5:59 AM	Rise 1:09 AM	30
12	Low	9:12 AM	0.7	7:53 PM	Set 4:16 PM	
12	High	3:34 PM	2.9			
12	Low	10:13 PM	0.6			
Mon 13	High	4:12 AM	2.5	6:00 AM	Rise 2:00 AM	22
13	Low	10:05 AM	0.5	7:51 PM	Set 5:01 PM	
13	High	4:29 PM	3.0			
13	Low	11:00 PM	0.4			
Tues. 14	High	5:07 AM	2.7	6:01 AM	Rise 2:55 AM	14
14	Low	10:54 AM	0.4	7:50 PM	Set 5:43 PM	
14	High	5:20 PM	3.2			
14	Low	11:44 PM	0.3			
Wed. 15	High	5:55 AM	2.8	6:02 AM	Rise 3:55 AM	8
15	Low	11:42 AM	0.3	7:49 PM	Set 6:20 PM	
15	High	6:05 PM	3.3			
Thur 16	Low	12:28 AM	0.2	6:03 AM	Rise 4:58 AM	3
16	High	6:38 AM	3.0	7:47 PM	Set 6:55 PM	
16	Low	12:29 PM	0.2			
16	High	6:46 PM	3.			
Fri. 17	Low	1:10 AM	0.0	6:04 AM	Rise 6:04 AM	0
17	High	7:18 AM	3.2	7:46 PM	Set 7:27 PM	
17	Low	1:15 PM	0.1			
17	High	7:25 PM	3.5			
Sat. 18	Low	1:51 AM	-0.1	6:05 AM	Rise 7:10 AM	0
18	High	7:58 AM	3.3	7:44 PM	Set 7:58 PM	
18	Low	2:01 PM	0.0			
18	High	8:05 PM	3.5			



by TONY SALERNO

FISHING WITH TONY

MORICHES BAY FISHING AT IT'S FINEST



John Salerno (left) and Matt Ranardo (right) with a limit of Moriches Bay fluke

If you haven't heard already, let it be known that the fluke fishing has become silly inside Moriches Bay for the past week. In fact, anglers testing their skills among the rental skiffs from Silly Lily Fishing Station, the open boat the Rosie or from their own vessels are finding fluke galore anywhere from buoy 14 to the west, through buoy 29 to the east. The last of the incoming to the start of the outgoing tide has been best with spearing, squid and killies on a buck-tail jig doing the trick. And to make matters even more enticing, the keeper ratio has been the best anyone has seen in recent memory. According to Gary over at Silly Lily Fishing Station in East Moriches, most keepers average between 3 and 5-pounds with a 7-pound beauty taken just off the Coast Guard Station by Jack and Delaney along with their dad this week. Aboard the Rosie, some trips are seeing patrons limiting out in no time, and the boat has been coming back to the dock early. On days when the weather permits, the Rosie has been filling out the coolers with plenty of tasty sea bass not far from the dock.

Further east inside Shinnecock Bay, the action has also been good at the top of the tide, but you'll have to cull through many shorts to attempt putting together a limit. Outside of Shinnecock, the ocean fluke action has been a bit sporadic, however sea bass, porgies and triggerfish have been providing steady action at the reef and at all the wrecks and rock piles. Stripers are also providing good action to those doling out live bait such as bunker, mullet and spot during the day and live eels during the evening hours. Try fishing through the outgoing tide since that is when the bass action is best.

Along the north shore, it continues to be porgy city anywhere from Cranes Neck to Rocky Point. The shallow water between 25 and 30 feet of water continues to produce plenty of action with medium to large porgies. The key is to fish strewn rocky bottom and dole out plenty of frozen logs of clam chum with clams, squid and sandworms on the hook. Despite the time of the year, the striper and blue fishing has been excellent near buoy 11 and the Middle Grounds with diamond jigs and chunks working best. Whatever your forte, now is the time to fill those coolers as the action can fizzle at anytime.