

LCYC Safety Requirements for Launching and Retrieving Boats

LCYC is blessed to be on one of the prettiest lakes in the Texas Hill Country. Given the nature of the Hill Country, our launch ramp has a 19% grade as a consequence. Due to several incidents in launching and retrieving boats on the LCYC ramp that could have resulted in serious personal injury or property damage, the Board of Governors of the Lake Canyon Yacht Club requires that all boat owners agree to the following Safety Requirements when on LCYC property:

1. Valid third party liability insurance.
2. No person shall remain on a vessel or trailer while in motion beyond the waters edge.
3. Safety chains or cables shall be properly attached while the vehicle/trailer is in motion; the only exceptions are non-highway dollies carrying dinghies with a combined weight of 300 lb or less, and the immediate waters edge launch area for keel boats.
4. Wheel chocks must be used when trailers are parked. As there are never enough of these, bring at least 2 (rocks do not qualify as proper chocks).
5. Immediate restriction from the use of LCYC launch facilities, up to and including disqualification from the regatta can be made by any LCYC Officer or by the Traffic Control Chair and Dockmaster for any violation of these Safety Requirements, or for any actions that create a risk of personal injury or property damage.
6. Boats parked on the main launch dock are subject to being moved and recommend they have fenders on the water and dock sides.
7. When the ramp is crowded, motor boats should consider hauling out on the far side of the ramp.
8. Boats should be rigged to launch before heading to the ramp.

TRAILER SAFETY REVIEW

Properly sized and installed Ball, Hitch, Coupler and Safety Chains are required for launching and recovery.

It is the responsibility of the owner/vehicle operator to understand the loads and install the proper Hitch, Ball, Coupler and Safety Chains and ensure that his/her boat does not become detached from the vehicle.

Here are some points and considerations gathered from TAC 37. 21.5 (d) and SAE J684 sec 7. These are not all inclusive and your boat and trailer may require additional safety measures.

If you are unsure of your Trailer and Boat combined Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) then you should determine that to ensure that your Hitch, Ball, Coupler and Safety Chains are sufficient.

The Trailer's Ball Coupler should be sized to the Ball being used and properly adjusted to minimize play and to prevent popping off. You should inspect the coupler and test it to ensure it is properly seated and attached. Use a Pin, Lock or Bolt to ensure that the Coupler locking lever is secured. Also ensure that the Ball is in good condition and properly bolted or attached to the Hitch. Ensure that the Vehicle Hitch Bolt and Locking Pin are secured.

Safety chains should be sized to fit the job. Each link/piece in the chain must have an ultimate strength of not less than the gross vehicle weight (GVW) of the items being towed. Over-rated chains are OK They should have no more slack than is necessary to permit the vehicle to turn properly and should be attached to the sides of the trailer tow bar, equal lengths on either side. The S hook style chains are not recommended although they might be sufficient for a light-weight trailer & boat. Gated Clevis Hooks with chains are preferred. The hooks should be clipped to the vehicle's frame, not the receiving hitch, in a crossed fashion (to act as a cradle for the tow bar in the event of accidental release). The hooks should be gated for a better connection. Avoid applications that alter the Hitch, Ball, Coupler, Chains and connections in any way. Welding, stretching links to accommodate bolts and twisting them to shorten the effective length reduces the overall chain strength. Safety Cables without additional Chains and Clevis Hooks are not recommended.

The following page is the Trailer Safety Inspection Checklist you will be asked to sign prior to launching your boat at the LCYC Ramp.

Trailer Safety Inspection Checklist (circle one)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Surface rust | Y | N |
| Penetrating rust | Y | N |
| Are any chain links stretched | Y | N |
| Is chain welded or any links damaged | Y | N |
| Any signs of wear, stress or chain drag | Y | N |
| If S-hook, they are Gated | Y | N |
| Using Gated Clevis Hooks | Y | N |
| Equal distance on either side of tow bar | Y | N |
| Chains are Crossed (and not twisted) | Y | N |
| Securely attached to side or top of trailer | Y | N |
| Securely clipped to the vehicle frame | Y | N |
| Both trailer and boat are insured | Y | N |

Owner/vehicle operator has completed the above checklist and certifies that the proper Hitch, Ball, Coupler and Safety Chains and Hooks have been installed and inspected.

Owner/vehicle operator

Date

Signature

Printed