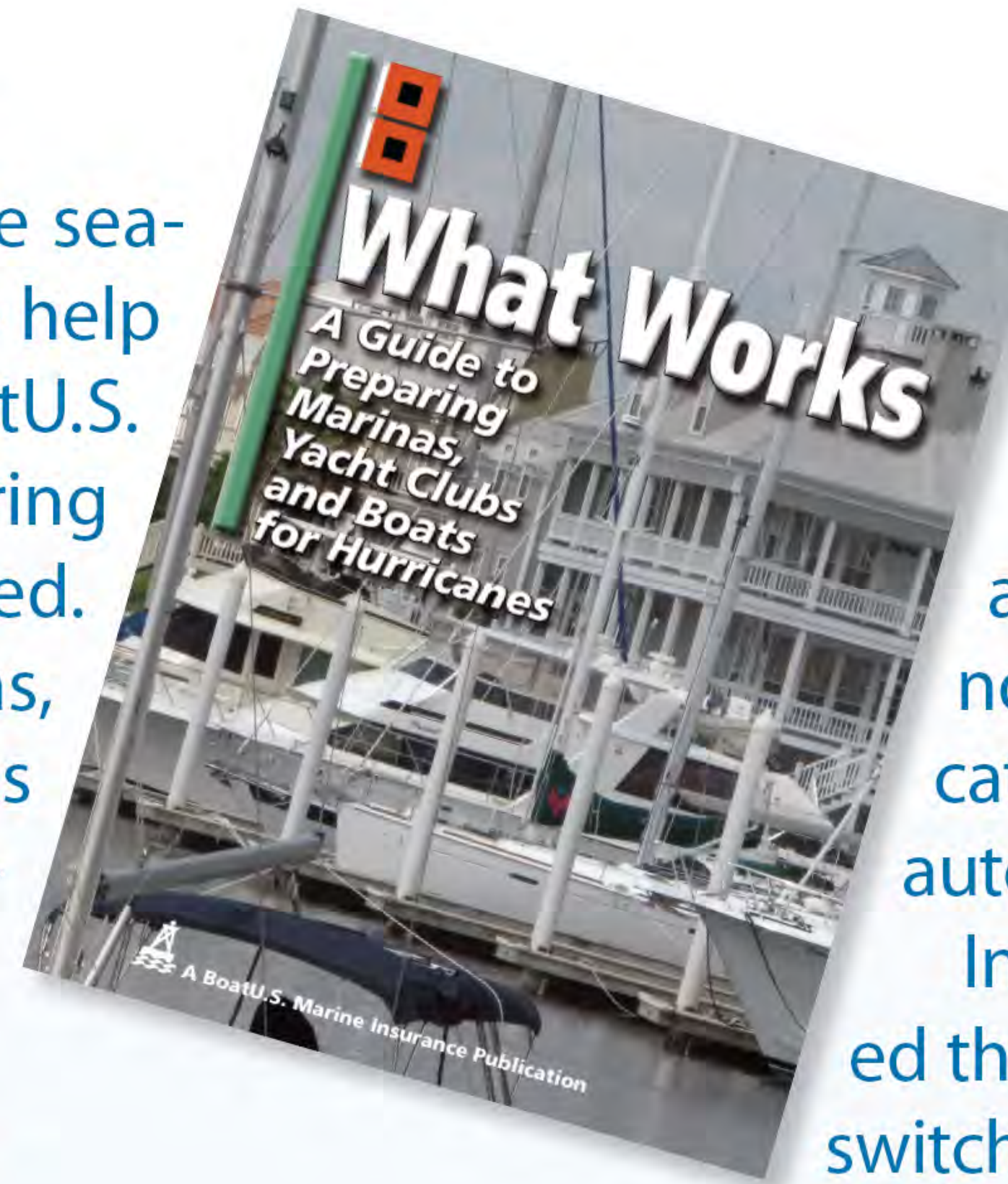


GET READY FOR STORM SEASON

Hurricane season is upon us yet again: The season runs from June 1- Nov. 30 each year. To help boaters prepare for this season's storms, BoatU.S. has published a guide offering tips on securing your boat, be it anchored, docked, or trailered. "What Works: A Guide to Preparing Marinas, Yacht Clubs and Boats for Hurricanes" walks you through developing and writing a hurricane prep plan for your boat.

The guide is free to download at www.boatus.com/hurricanes/hurr_prep_guide.pdf.



USCG ISSUES ALERT ABOUT VHF's WITH DSC

The U.S. Coast Guard has issued a marine safety alert on some DSC (Digital Selective Calling)-equipped VHF marine radios that feature automatic channel switching.

According to the alert, the feature can pose an unintended danger by automatically switching the radio from a working channel that is in use to Channel 16 when the radio receives a DSC distress alert, distress alert acknowledgment, or other DSC call where a VHF channel number has been designated.

"This could happen without a vessel/radio operator's immediate knowledge and could initiate an unsafe condition by

which the vessel/radio operators would believe they were communicating on a working channel such as Channel 13 when, in fact, they were actually on Channel 16," the alert stated.

Imagine a towboat operator making passing agreements on channel 6, and without warning, not being able to quickly reestablish communications with those vessels because his/her radio automatically switched to Channel 16.

In the alert, the Coast Guard strongly recommended that radio handlers disable the automatic channel switching feature on their VHF's when maintaining a listening watch, communicating on the designated bridge-to-bridge radiotelephone, or while monitoring the vessel traffic services (VTS) channel. The Federal Communications Commission requires all DSC-equipped radios certified after March 25, 2009, to allow the auto channel changing to be disabled. Radios that cannot be disabled should not be used for bridge-to-bridge or VTS communications, according to the Coast Guard.

Marine VHF makers that are affected by this alert include Raymarine, Standard Horizon, and Uniden. For the full alert and list of affected manufacturers, visit www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/dsc.htm.