What is a FLOAT PLAN

If you are going for just a few hours on your boat, let someone know where you expect to be and when you expect to return. If you plan a longer cruise, leave a copy of a written *float plan* with your *marina*, yacht club, or friend. A float plan includes a description of your boat, who is on board, a description of the safety equipment you are carrying, where you expect to be, and when you expect to be there. Instruct the person holding the float plan to notify the Coast Guard or other appropriate agency if you do not return within a reasonable time after your scheduled arrival (taking into account weather, etc.). When you arrive at your destination, or if your plans change, notify the person holding your float plan to avoid unnecessary worry and possible waste of search and rescue resources. There is no special or official form that you must use for a float plan, though you may find convenient pre-printed ones available in boating supply stores and catalogs, or you can generate a customized form using our Float Plan template. Do not attempt to file the form with the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard will not accept float plans.

The USPS template is a flexible tool for helping you generate a customized float plan. You may use it in several different ways.

1. You can fill in all the information needed, "Generate" the plan and print the results.
2. You can fill in only the information which will not be changing, "Generate" the plan, and print the results. You can then fill in information on your customized paper forms as needed.
3. You can generate a customized form as above and then SAVE the generated template as a local file on your machine. You can then open your local template in your browser any time you need a plan, type in the missing information and print your plan. Or, if you want to generate a new local template, you can open your local template in your browser, add or change the "fixed" information, "Generate" a new plan, and SAVE the new template in your local machine. Note: The default save name will be "fplan.cgi", however, you should change it to "fplan.htm" so it will be easier to recall.

Complete this form before boating and leave it with a reliable person who can be depended upon to notify the *Coast Guard* or other rescue organization in case you do not return as scheduled. *Do not try to file this form with the Coast Guard, they do not accept float plans*. A word of caution: In case you are delayed, and it is not an emergency, inform those with your float plan, the police and/or Coast Guard of your delay in order to avoid an unnecessary search!