America’s Waterway Watch is a national awareness program that asks those who work, live, or recreate on or near the water to be aware of suspicious activity that might indicate threats to our country’s homeland security.

Americans are urged to adopt a heightened sensitivity toward unusual events or individuals they may encounter in or around ports, docks, marinas, riversides, beaches, or communities.

Anyone observing suspicious activity is simply asked to note details and contact the National Response Center’s Hotline at 800-424-8802 or 877-24WATCH.

For immediate danger to life or property call 9-1-1.

What is “suspicious activity”? Check inside.
America’s coasts, rivers, bridges, tunnels, ports, ships, military bases, and waterside industries may be the terrorists’ next targets.

Waterway security is better than ever.

But with more than 95,000 miles of shoreline, more than 290,000 square miles of water and approximately 70 million recreational boats in the United States, the U.S. Coast Guard and local first responders can’t do the job alone.

Many Americans have asked, “How can I help?”

This is how.

What to Look For

Be aware of suspicious activity, particularly near the locations listed to the right, including:

- People appearing to be engaged in surveillance of any kind (note taking, shooting video/photos, making sketches, or asking questions).
- Recovering or tossing items into/onto the waterway or shoreline.
- Unattended vessels or vehicles in unusual locations.
- Lights flashing between boats.
- Unusual diving activity.
- Unusual number of people onboard.
- Unusual night operations.
- Operating in or passing through an area that does not typically have such activity.
- Fishing/hunting in locations not typically used for those activities.
- Missing fencing or lighting near sensitive locations.
- Anchoring in an area not typically used for anchorage.
- Transfer of people or things between ships or between ship and shore.
- Anyone operating in an aggressive manner.
- Individuals establishing businesses or roadside food stands near sensitive locations.
- Small planes flying over critical areas.
- People attempting to buy or rent fishing or recreational vessels with cash for short-term, undefined use.

Where to Look

Watch for vessels and individuals in sensitive locations:

- Under and around bridges, tunnels, or overpasses.
- Near commercial areas or services like ports, fuel docks, cruise ships, or marinas.
- Near industrial facilities like power plants and oil, chemical, or water intake facilities.
- Near military bases and vessels, other government facilities, or security zones.

What to Do

Secure and lock your boat when not on board. Take the keys. Disable the engine on stored or trailered boats, and make sure the boat is not easily moved.

Do not approach or challenge anyone acting in a suspicious manner. Call the National Response Center at 800-424-8802, 877-24WATCH or 911.