

Manatee Safety and Preservation

Marina Puerto Del Rey is an area visited by several manatees throughout the year. The manatee is one of the protected species under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 and the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Both federal and state jurisdiction impose severe penalties for the taken of any endangered species. Taken is defined as harassment, hunting, feeding and any other activity that affect the animal behavior, causes stress, injury or dead. The manatee is also protected by the Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act of 1978, which states: "It is unlawful for any person, at any time, intentionally or negligently, to annoy, molest, harass, or disturb any manatee."

Anyone convicted of violating this state law faces a possible maximum fine of \$500 and/or imprisonment for up to 60 days. Conviction on the federal level is punishable by fine of up to \$50,000 and/or one year in prison. The State of Florida can pursue prosecution under federal law in circumstances of extreme harassment, resulting in the death or injury of a manatee.

We are committed to the preservation of our marine environment and the protection of those species that coexist within and outside our property. The following federal and state regulations must be followed for all those operating vessels on our navigable waters:

1. Maintain a safe speed at all times while in or near the marina. Safe speed is defined by federal, state and international navigational regulations as the minimum speed which a vessel can maintain control. Absolutely do not create wakes within the marina.
2. Whenever operating a vessel within the marina or outside vicinity maintain a sharp lookout or live watch in order to detect the presence of any manatee. If you encounter a manatee on your track stop all engines and steer clear of the animal. Maintain a minimum distance of 50 feet from the animal(s). Do not harass the animal. It must be left alone and allow to depart on his/her own free will.
3. If an incident occurs with a manatee reported immediately to the Harbor Master, Customer Service or any one of our staff members.

4. The Antillean manatee is found in eastern Mexico, Central America, northern and eastern South America, and in the Greater Antilles (Lefebvre et al., 1989). In Puerto Rico, the manatee is most abundant along the south and east coasts, particularly in the area of Fajardo and Ceiba (Roosevelt Roads Naval Station) and in the Jobos Bay area between Guayama and Salinas.

