

Understanding And Avoiding Thunderstorms

Overview

Thunderstorms can quickly spoil an outing in many ways—strong winds, large waves, dangerous lightning, waterspouts, or visibility-limiting rain. This four-hour clinic will examine the various types of thunderstorms and the ingredients that lead to their formation. The clinic will cover why thunderstorms often ‘pop-up’ late on summer afternoons and why some storms have short life-spans while others persist for several hours. The clinic will also introduce the many readily-available resources for forecasting and monitoring thunderstorms.

The clinic is designed for all boaters (power and sail) who would like to reduce their chances of a hair-raising or windswept encounter with a thunderstorm.

You will learn the following at the clinic:

- A few basic weather principles.
- How to decode the confusing symbols, color shading, and meteorological shorthand on weather forecast maps.
- How to recognize the large and small-scale weather patterns that promote thunderstorm development.
- The ingredients needed for thunderstorm development and their life-cycle.
- How to forecast the potential and nature of severe weather.
- The dynamics of lightning and a review of the latest advice on lightning protection for your boat.
- How to use Doppler Weather Radar to assess the development, monitor the evolution, and track the movement of thunderstorms.
- The terminology used by the National Weather Service during hazardous and severe weather events.

The four-hour clinic combines classroom instruction, case studies, and exercises to create an engaging learning experience.

Mark Thornton - Speaker Biography

Mark Thornton began sailing on Lake Erie in 1994 and he currently owns *Osprey*, a 1985 C&C 35. His interest in weather forecasting grew from his experiences cruising and racing on the lake. Mark is a 2006 graduate of the Penn State University Certificate of Achievement in Weather Forecasting, a two-year program that develops skills in general, tropical and severe weather forecasting.

His company, LakeErieWX Marine Weather, provides marine weather education, forecasting resources and weather routing for recreational boaters (www.lakeeriewx.com). He has served as the race meteorologist for the Bell's Beer Bayview Race to Mackinac since 2014. Mark is employed as a Teaching Assistant in the *Certificate of Achievement in Weather Forecasting Program* at Penn State University.

Contact Information

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