

2026 PARADE OF LIGHTS

Boat Parade Skipper's Meeting

Date: Sunday, December 13, 2026

Theme: Hawaiian Holiday

Rules and Regulations:

- Vessels participating in the parade must monitor **VHF Channel 06**. Have someone continuously monitor your radio. Vessels not monitoring Channel 06 may be disqualified.
- Vessels must follow the designated parade route. Stay in order throughout the parade.
- All vessels must be under auxiliary power during the parade. The average speed is 3 to 5 knots. Maintain spacing of about 200 feet between vessels.
- If disabled or unable to continue in the parade, please advise Harbor Patrol on Channel 06. Immediately turn off all decorative lighting and abruptly turn out of the parade route.
- Anchoring gear must be ready to deploy in case of an emergency.
- Vessels being operated without due respect for the participants will be disqualified and removed from the parade.
- All boats must always have a proper lookout. Every skipper is responsible for taking evasive action to avoid a collision.
- Skippers are responsible for ensuring their vessel has all the required safety equipment, including adequate fire extinguishers suitable for Class A, B, and C fires.
- All vessels must be equipped with the proper number of lifejackets (PFDs)
- Running lights must be operational and visible.
- Operating a vessel while under the influence of any intoxicant is strictly forbidden by law: Harbors and Navigation Code 655(b).
- Absolutely no personal fireworks, skyrockets, or non-emergency distress flares allowed.
- All participants must complete and sign the [parade entry form](#) with the waiver before the start of the parade.

Staging from 4:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.:

- The staging area will be offshore from the Breakwater and SB Yacht Club, as shown on the Parade Route Map at the end of this document.
- All vessels should be in the staging area by **5:00 p.m.**
- Harbor Patrol will be positioned off the Breakwater with a blue flashing light and will act as the eastern turning mark in the circular staging area.
- The yellow flashing buoy will act as the western turning mark in the circular staging area.
- Vessels shall move in a counterclockwise circle, adjusting speed and distance between boats.
- Vessels shall leave Harbor Patrol and all yellow flashing lights to port.
- Harbor Patrol will announce the start of the parade and lead the parade of boats starting at **5:30 p.m.**

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Parade Route:

- When all the vessels are in the staging area, Harbor Patrol will announce the beginning of the parade over VHF Channel 06.
- Harbor Patrol will depart the staging area and begin leading the parade towards the flashing white “SB Buoy” shown on the Parade Route Map. All other vessels shall follow behind.
- Pass the “SB” Buoy flashing white channel marker buoy on your **port side** and continue on the route, passing all the flashing yellow buoys on your **port side**.
- Pass the southwest “Outfall” flashing yellow buoy on your port side.
- Proceed eastward to the flashing yellow buoy on the east end of the Mooring Area and make the port turn toward East Beach.
- Continue North to the next flashing yellow buoy off the Cabrillo Pavilion (which has white lights on the building).
- Turn West and proceed to the next flashing yellow and white buoy at the east end of the Mooring Area, about ½ mile from Stearns Wharf.
- Continue West to the next flashing yellow buoy, about ¼ mile from Stearns Wharf.
- Continue West to the next flashing yellow buoy located off the Stearns Wharf Wye.
- **CAUTION: Watch the shallow depth in this area!!!**
- Turn South and continue to the end of Stearns Wharf. Round the end of the wharf and continue past the judges’ stand on the Moby Dick restaurant patio. This is the end of the parade route.
- If you wish to watch the fireworks outside the Harbor, carefully make a turn to port and proceed back outside the harbor entrance. If not, continue towards the main channel and away from the Harbor entrance to clear the route for other boats.

Judging:

- Judging will be done from the Moby Dick restaurant patio on Stearns Wharf. There will be five surprise judges.
- Parade numbers (provided at the Skipper's Meeting) should be displayed at deck level, on the starboard side of the forward quarter of the vessel. **If the parade number is not visible to the judges, the vessel will not be judged.**
- The judging categories are Power, Sail, Commercial Fishing, Commercial Other, and Human-Powered.
- There will be 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes in each category, plus a Grant Prize Award.

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Safety Reminders:

- Do not slow down or stop in the area of the judges (Moby Dick restaurant on Stearns Wharf).
- Maintain the optimum distance of 200 feet between boats.
- Pay attention to water depth and swells.
- Portable generators should be mounted securely on an open deck. Exhaust shall go over the side, away from the decorations and enclosed spaces. (Caution CO Poisoning).
- Gasoline can easily ignite on the outside of a hot generator!!! Use extreme caution while refueling!!!
- Parade decorations must be fireproof or fire-retardant. Assign one person to "fire watch" duty. A fire extinguisher shall remain on deck at all times.

Fireworks:

- The fireworks display will take place immediately following the parade. It will last approximately 5 minutes.
- Aerial fireworks will be launched from West Beach, between Santa Barbara Landing and Stearns Wharf.
- A safety zone for the fireworks "fall-out" will be established with the following borders (shown in the highlighted area on the Parade Route Map):
 - South: Harbor Entrance/Line of Demarcation
 - East: Stearns Wharf
 - North: West Beach
 - West: Santa Barbara Landing Rock Groin
- No vessels will be permitted to anchor or transit this zone during the fireworks display. Please keep this zone clear during the fireworks display. Harbor Patrol and the U.S. Coast Guard will patrol the area.

Reminder: Return Your Parade Boat Number to the Waterfront Department After the Parade is Over. Thank You!!!

