

Tidal Grids

The time honoured use of Tidal Grids provides a traditional way of careening a vessel to perform maintenance. Grids continue to be an important resource to the boating fraternity.

Tidal Grid structures comprise a row of piles for vessels to tie up to so they are kept upright as the tide ebbs. Some have a concrete base or floor; others have sleepers or rails to keep the base of the keel above the seabed.



Only permitted activities are allowed at Tidal Grids in New Zealand.

Regional councils, boat clubs and marinas often provide one or more tidal grids for casual hire. However careening is rarely done these days as yacht designs increasingly use fin keel hull shapes that are a bit more challenging to careen, at tidal grid. Twenty years ago, most yachts sported traditional full keel hull shapes, or at least, long fins and skeg-hung rudders. Alternatives to tidal grids have also become more available as boat yards have been built, even in remote areas, in response to a rise in boating popularity. Finally, few sailors now are comfortable with the thought of careening. Most prefer to use professional services such as travel lifts with slings, for scheduled antifoul repainting, and only consider using tidal grids for inspection and minor repairs, such as anode replacement.

Tips For Using Tidal Grids

- Contact the Grid owner for permission and advice on the particular grid operation.
- Carefully measure the water depth at different states of the tide. It is usually best to spend a day monitoring the tide before you careen.
- Most importantly, you must position the keel so that the boat will lean into the grid slightly. Definitely don't lean away from the grid or lean too far against the grid.
- When you pull along side, leave 300mm to 500mm between the grid and the widest section of your topsides. As the boat drops it will become obvious if you are too close or too far away. Before you are completely grounded you may need to give the engine a shot of power to push the boat one way or the other.
- When alongside be sure to secure your fenders horizontally because you tend to roll on your fenders as the boat drops with the tide.
- Remember that you will need to tend your mooring lines as the boat drops. Try rigging up a snatch block near the chocks and run extra long mooring lines to winches for added oomph, just in case you need it. The aft mooring line can usually be lead to a sheet or spinnaker winch. The forward line can be handled by a halyard winch, or in some cases, the windlass.
- Before you are stranded in the boat, remember to devise a method to get down to the ground; few grids are set up for this purpose.
- Finally, once you are careened, work quickly within the tide range ensuring no maintenance debris is left behind.

Permitted Activities Using Tidal Grids

- Inspection &/or minor maintenance of underwater appendages
- Propeller/shaft/gland area inspections maintenance
- Rudder stock/bearings inspections maintenance
- Zinc Anode inspection/replacement
- Through hull fittings/valve inspections maintenance
- Speed log/transducer inspections maintenance

Inappropriate use of Tidal Grids such as water blasting fouled underwater appendages exposes the coastal environment to pollution and biosecurity risks from the discharge of contaminants and the release of potential pest organisms attached to the hull.

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) prohibits unlawful discharge to the coastal marine area. Regional Councils can issue infringement notices (instant fines) to those found in breach of the RMA requirements.

All of us have a role to play in keeping our coastal water clean. It's our playground, a food source and supports our valued marine ecosystems. We need to look after our coastal water for future generations to enjoy as we do today. Please report any inappropriate use of Tidal Grids to your local Regional Council Pollution Hotline.