

KEEP IT OUT OF THE GULF

Reducing Marine Debris in the Waters of Orange Beach

Why This Matters

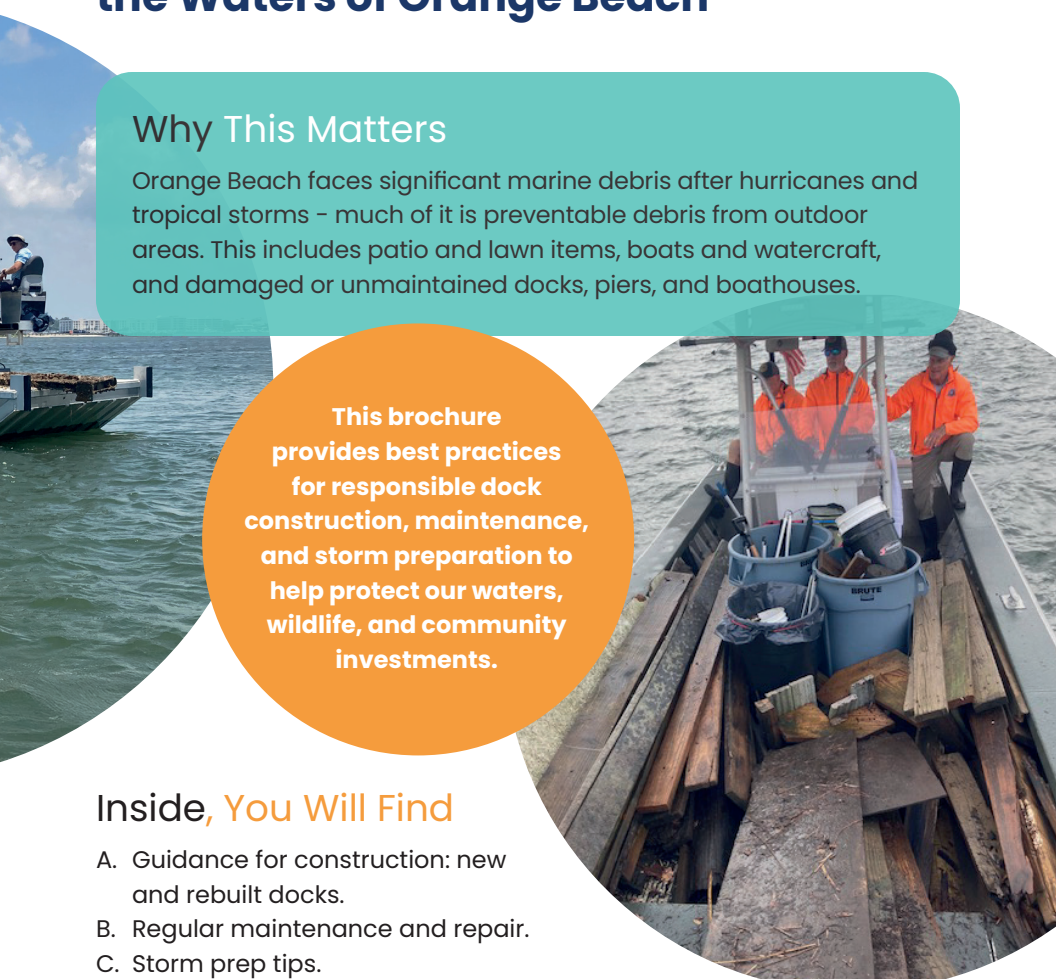
Orange Beach faces significant marine debris after hurricanes and tropical storms – much of it is preventable debris from outdoor areas. This includes patio and lawn items, boats and watercraft, and damaged or unmaintained docks, piers, and boathouses.

This brochure provides best practices for responsible dock construction, maintenance, and storm preparation to help protect our waters, wildlife, and community investments.

Inside, You Will Find

- A. Guidance for construction: new and rebuilt docks.
- B. Regular maintenance and repair.
- C. Storm prep tips.
- D. Sustainable building options.
- E. Information about our Clean Waters Contractor Program.

Additional technical details and information are available online at www.orangebeachal.gov/250/Waterways-Shoreline-Cleanup



a Construction: Building or Rebuilding Your Dock

Choose a Qualified Contractor

Selecting the right professional ensures your dock stands strong – and minimizes the chances that it will become debris. Consider their:

- Years in business.
- Experience with similar projects.
- Warranty and maintenance guidance.

Check in with the Clean Waters Contractor program for Recognized Contractors (Section E).

Invest in Quality Materials

Choosing a qualified contractor is just the first step. Selecting quality materials and implementing

best practices all ensure the best outcome for your investment – while minimizing debris in our waters.

Cheaper options may cost more in the long run.

- Use marine-grade treated pilings.
- Choose stainless steel or hot-dipped galvanized hardware.
- Consider composite or recycled decking for longer life and lower maintenance.

Design for Strength and Longevity

- Use larger diameter piles.
- Consider higher deck heights to reduce storm surge impacts.
- Use hurricane-rated roofing materials.

Construction Practices

- Proper containment of materials – for larger wood-based projects, a debris curtain is recommended.
- Crew should dispose of construction materials and personal trash.



b Regular Maintenance and Repair

Keep your dock storm-ready year-round with simple upkeep.

- Inspect regularly for loose hardware, excessive rust, and damaged boards.
- Replace deteriorating materials before they become hazards.
- Inspect electrical lines and lighting to prevent shock and debris hazards.
- Dispose of waste properly – never leave old building material, lumber, or metal near the water.

c Storm Preparation: Before the Storm Hits

Storms are unpredictable, but good preparation can make a big difference. Taking time to secure your property before a hurricane not only protects your investment — it also helps keep marine debris out of our waters.

Develop a Hurricane Prep Checklist

1. **Secure or Remove Boats and Watercraft**

- Remove boats and recreational vessels from the water.
- If larger boats are not removed, secure them properly.

2. **Reinforce Your Structure**

- Secure or remove any loose roofing panels or decking.
- Tighten or secure any loose bracing, fasteners, and screws.
- Add temporary bracing where possible.

3. **Clear All Outdoor Areas**

- Remove or secure items from

docks, porches, pool decks, patios, and yards that could become windborne debris.

- Store patio furniture, umbrellas, grills, trash cans, planters, and tools in a safe, enclosed location.
- Secure sheds and outdoor storage.
- Remove dock boxes, cleaning stations, and other loose fixtures and place them inland.

4. **Additional Safety Steps**

- Remove floating dock sections if possible.
- Shut off electrical power and water supply to docks and outdoor systems.

(what applies to your property?)

Remember: Every home, dock, and property is different — and so is every storm plan. Small actions across our community make a big difference in reducing debris and protecting our waterways.

d Sustainable Building for a Cleaner Future

Building smarter helps protect both your investment and the environment.

- Incorporating composite or synthetic decking materials will greatly minimize maintenance needs and protect against the weathering and decay common in wooden decking.
- Consider flow-through/grated decking to reduce storm surge uplift and limit impact to flora and fauna below.

Plan with resilience in mind — a dock built to last is less likely to end up in the Gulf.

● Clean Waters Contractor Program

The Clean Waters Contractor Program recognizes local contractors who voluntarily participate in the Orange Beach initiative.

Participating contractors:

- Attend an annual Clean Waters initiative meeting.
- Share similar values and goals for Clean Waters.
- Help homeowners build stronger, smarter, and cleaner.
- Are recognized by the City of Orange Beach as a "Clean Waters Partner".

If you're a contractor interested in participating, contact the City of Orange Beach Coastal Resources (Tel: (251) 981-1063) or check out the Waterways and Shoreline Enhancement Program Website.

Recognized contractors can be found at www.orangebeachal.gov/250/Waterways-Shoreline-Cleanup



Together, We Can Build, Maintain, and Plan Better

Every dock, every choice, and every repair makes a lasting impact. By selecting quality materials, preparing for storms, and partnering with responsible contractors, you're helping keep the waters of Orange Beach and the surrounding coast clean, strong, and thriving for generations to come.

