

OUTDOOR UW MOORING FIELD: TENANT GUIDE

Welcome to the Outdoor UW (OUW) mooring community. This document outlines the required procedures and safety standards for all tenants to ensure a functional and safe waterfront for everyone.

MOORING FIELD 1 - MEMORIAL UNION TERRACE

SHORE-TO-MOORING TRANSPORT

Rowing Dinghies are provided to access moored boats in Field 1.

To maintain access for all members, equipment must be handled as shared community resources. Report any issues to the OUW Office.

EQUIPMENT ACCESS

- **Tender Dinghies:** Two or more rowing dinghies are available on the Eastwing of the T-Dock.
- **Yellow Kayak:** Typically available on the OUW Floating Docks.
- **Lock & Combination:** Dinghies should be locked to the dock after sunset. Contact OUW staff for the lock combination.
- **Hoofer Sailing Club (HSC) Rowboats:** Hoofers has added a couple dinghies to the fleet. Tenants may use HSC rowing dinghies unless otherwise noted. *Note that the HSC allows for one of their dinghies to be left at the mooring pin for the Cape Dory "Egert" while sailing.*

USAGE REQUIREMENTS

- **Immediate Return:** Return the dinghy to the dock immediately after retrieving your boat.
- **No Mooring Tie-ups:** Do **not** leave a dinghy tied to your mooring while out sailing.
- **Storage:** Do not leave dinghies in the water. Store paddles on their designated racks to maintain equipment condition.
- **Staff Assistance:** Outdoor UW staff are available to help you launch a dinghy if needed.

MOTORBOATS

HSC operates a number of motorboats in support of their program. The motorboats are not part of the OUW Moorings equipment. However, Hoofers are often willing to pick up "hitchhikers". Please keep in mind that not all sailing club members are allowed to drive the motorboats, and those who can are often under time constraints or are on the clock for work, so a ride is not guaranteed. Please kindly accept their decision.

- **Availability:** Motorboat rides are not guaranteed. Only rated HSC members may operate HSC motorboats

- **Staffing:** Front desk students may lack the required permits or experience to operate motorboats.
- **Youth Camp Priority:** During weekday HSC Youth Camps, motorboats and instructors are dedicated strictly to camper safety and cannot provide assistance.
- **Red Flag:** Hoofers will assist all people in and on the water when UW Lake Safety issues a Red Flag Storm Warning.

FIELD 2 & 4 PADDLE CRAFT STORAGE

Renters must display a OUW rentals sticker marked with the appropriate year on their craft at Willows Beach. This will allow us to recognize boats that are squatting on the property. You can pick these stickers up at OUW or we are happy to mail you one upon request.



PADDLE CRAFT STORAGE

- **Assigned Space:** All Field 2 renters are allowed a tether or rack space at Willow Beach. If you have not received your assignment, contact OUWmanager@union.wisc.edu.
- **First-Come, First-Serve:** Specific spots are not assigned within the tether areas; any open tether space is available for use.
- **Security:** You should always lock your boat to the tether.
- **Identification:** All craft at Willows Beach must display a current **OUW rentals sticker**. These are available at the OUW office or via mail.

If you are looking for parking near Willows Beach, please see the campus parking map [HERE](#). There are a number of lots very close to Willows Beach that are free after 4:30 on weekdays and all day on Saturdays and Sundays.

TONG FAMILY MARINA: PIER & DOCK USAGE RULES

The primary purpose of the piers and marina is to support Hoofer Clubs and Outdoor UW (OUW) programming. Tenants are welcome to use the Hoofer T-Dock (North side), Scow pier, and Sloop pier under the following regulations.

PERMITTED ACTIVITIES

- **Loading & Unloading:** You may tie up briefly at the piers to load or unload your private sailboat or dinghy.
- **Utility Access:** You are welcome to use the power and water stations on the piers, provided this does not interfere with ongoing club activities.
- **Club Cooperation:** You must cooperate with OUW and Hoofer Sailing Club event leaders at all times. Please be aware that many of the boats around the piers are people just learning to sail or paddle.

STRICT PROHIBITIONS

- **No Unattended Boats:** Do not leave your boat unattended at the piers, as this interferes with Sailing Club operations.
- **No Overnight Docking:** Overnight tie-ups are strictly prohibited.
- **Crane Docks:** Do not tie up to the crane docks unless specifically directed to do so by staff.
- **High Wind Safety:** For the safety of the infrastructure and your vessel, do not tie up to the windward side of any pier during high winds.

REQUESTING EXCEPTIONS

Permission for temporary exceptions to these rules must be requested from OUW Full-time Staff (including the Director, Hoofer Advisors, Head of Instruction, or OUW Program Manager) or the Hoofer Sailing Club Commodore.

MOORING & PENNANT REQUIREMENTS

Tenants are responsible for providing and maintaining their own securement hardware.

To help ensure the safety of your vessel and others in the field, all tenants must adhere to these hardware and installation standards.

REQUIRED HARDWARE

You are responsible for providing and maintaining all securement hardware above the mooring buoy.

- **Dual Pennant System:** You must connect two independent mooring lines (pennants) to the buoy for redundancy and safety.
- **Marine-Grade Materials:** Use only galvanized steel or stainless steel marine-quality hardware.
- **Safety Wiring:** All shackle pins must be "safety-wired" shut using corrosion-resistant wire to prevent them from unscrewing due to vibration and wave action.

INSTALLATION STANDARDS

- **Primary Connection:** Attach your shackles directly to the large shackle provided by OUW on top of the mooring ball.
- **Secondary Option:** While attaching one pennant to the upper shackle and one to the swivel below the buoy is acceptable, we strongly recommend connecting both to the top shackle.
- **Pennant Length:** Keep lines to a functional length; overly long pennants increase the risk of boats colliding in shifting winds.



CRITICAL SAFETY PROHIBITIONS

- **Do Not Open OUW Hardware:** Under no circumstances should you remove or undo the bailing wire or the primary shackle provided by Outdoor UW. Doing so could result in mooring failure.

- **No Improvised Ties:** Do not use zip ties, carabiners, or non-marine clips in place of wired shackles.

RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES

- **Chafe & Wrap Protection:** Install a floating device, such as a "pool noodle," on the first few feet of your mooring line wear it hit the water. This prevents the line from wrapping around the chain and suffering chafe and damage.
- **Metal Thimbles:** Use metal thimbles on the shackle end of your lines to protect the rope from friction and wear.
- **Regular Inspection:** Regularly inspect all your hardware and lines for signs of wear or missing safety wire



MAINTENANCE & SAFETY

- **Inspections:** OUW hires divers to inspect chains and connections annually, typically in the spring when visibility is better.
- **Diver Safety:** Give a wide berth to any **diver-down flags** (red with a white diagonal stripe).
- **Reporting:** If you notice hardware damage or a missing/failing securement wire, notify management immediately.

UNDERSTANDING THE MOORING SYSTEM

We are often asked about the proper buoy setup. Our anchors are large metal plates that sink into the lakebed. Weight and suction from the mud hold it very securely in place. From the plate, heavy drag chains are connected to a lighter chain that terminates at the top of the buoy. A swivel is placed a couple feet below the buoy. Due to the wave action we experience in our fields, we EXPECT that you connect **two pennants** to the mooring. Some people will attach one above the buoy to the provided shackle and one under the buoy. Others attach both to the provided shackle atop the mooring. Either solution is acceptable. *We currently recommend having both on top.* Your shackles should connect to our shackle on the buoy. Do NOT undo or remove the bailing wire on our shackle and pin. ALL shackles and pins must be wired shut. Let us know immediately if the wire is missing or failing.

THE OUTDOOR UW SERVICE DESK

OUW and the Hoofer Sailing Club monitor VHF Ch.69

Operating hours for the OUW Office is [HERE](#)

Please note that the operating hours of OUW vary throughout the season.

UW LAKE RESCUE & SAFETY

UWPD operates the Lake Rescue & Safety out of the building just to the east of the Edgewater Hotel. They are a public service on the lake for safety. They can be hailed on VHF CH 16. Note that their [hours shift throughout](#) the year as the length of the day changes.

In the event of an emergency with your boat, the contacts below may be helpful. Unless you are experiencing a true emergency, we ask that you do not contact us on our personal cell phones. We are, of course, happy to help after hours if we are needed.

WATER QUALITY ISSUES AND BLUE-GREEN ALGAE

University Environmental and Health Service monitors the quality of water around the Hoofer piers at least once a week. In the case of contamination, Blue-Green algae, etc., they will issue notices and closers. These can be found [online](#) and in the Outdoor UW office.

[Blue-Green Algae](#) is the most common reason we have warnings. Usually, the risk is immediately in the area of the mat of algae on the surface of the water. Apart from smelling terrible, it can be dangerous to humans and deadly to pets.

CONTACT INFORMATION

MARK GILLESPIE, SAILING PROGRAM MANAGER

e-mail: mtgillespie@wisc.edu

Office: 608-262-7351

HOOFER SAILING HEAD OF INSTRUCTION

e-mail: headofinstruction@hoofersailing.org

office phone: 608-262-1630

LAKE RESCUE & SAFETY - [LINK TO WEBSITE](#)

Emergency Phone: 608-262-3505

Non-emergency Phone: 608-262-5865

VHF: Channel 16 – Hail “UW Rescue”

DAVE ELSMO, OUTDOOR UW DIRECTOR

e-mail: David.Elsmo@wisc.edu

Office: 608-265-8453

UW POLICE DEPARTMENT

e-mail: uwpolice@mhub.uwpd.wisc.edu

phone: 608-264-2677

OUTDOOR UW SERVICE DESK MANAGER

e-mail: OUWManager@union.wisc.edu

OUW Service Desk: 608-262-1630

VHF: Channel 69 - Hail “OUW Desk”

OTHER IMPORTANT CONTENT

The above information AND important FAQs will be available on the Union’s OUW [website specific for the mooring field](#)

2026 SEASON MOORING BUOY LEASE AGREEMENT

Moorings available: May 1st, 2026 through October 25, 2026

This agreement entered on the date noted on this registration by the Wisconsin Union of the University of WI – Madison with the Lessee.

In consideration of covenants contained herein, the parties hereto do mutually agree as follows:

1. The Wisconsin Union shall lease to lessee one boat mooring space in the specified mooring area on Lake Mendota for the period set forth in paragraph 3. In mooring areas #1 and #2 only, the Union shall provide and maintain the mooring from the anchor to the buoy. In area #4, the lessee shall provide, place, and maintain their own mooring including anchor and buoy. Said buoy must comply with all state rules, regulations and laws, and must be positioned so that lessee's boat remains within the boundaries of the mooring field at all times.
2. The use of moorings in the Wisconsin Union mooring fields is intended for the private recreational use of the lessees. Personally subletting and/or commercial use of the moorings is strictly prohibited and constitutes explicit grounds for unilateral termination of this agreement. Only the boat belonging to the lessee and specially authorized dinghies/tenders may be stored at the mooring. Any changes in equipment must be pre-approved by the Mooring Field Manager.
3. Lessee shall be liable for and shall pay rent to the Wisconsin Union according to the schedule indicated below for the period from May 1st 2026 through October 25, 2026. Lessee agrees that their boat will be removed no later than October 25, 2025.
4. The Wisconsin Union shall not be liable for any damage that occurs to any boat moored at the buoy covered by this agreement, or tethered at Wisconsin Union boat docks, with said damage including, but not limited to, damage caused by swinging, collision, break-loose or vandalism.
5. Lessee agrees to provide two appropriate (diameter) mooring lines, in good condition, to attach their boat to their assigned mooring. The Wisconsin Union will provide a shackle atop the mooring ball that shall not be removed for any reason. Lessee agrees to remove all lines and hardware from the buoy no later than the removal date specified in clause #3, (above). The Wisconsin Union shall not be liable for the loss of or damage to any mooring lines or hardware at any time, particularly to those left on the buoy past the removal date.
6. Lessee shall provide a certificate of insurance specifying the amounts and types of insurance provided by their insurance carrier for their vessel for the duration of the lease. Lessee shall also provide the Union with emergency contact information and a detailed description of their vessel. All these materials must be provided prior to Lessee's vessel being placed in the mooring field. The Lessee must update this information as it changes.
7. The Wisconsin Union will make paddle dinghies available for travel to and from vessels moored at buoys covered by this agreement for Field #1. Lessee agrees to ensure that all passengers in such transportation are provided with an appropriate, legal PFD (personal flotation device). Lessee agrees that, when using such transportation at night, they will provide an appropriate, legal light. The Wisconsin Union will provide space free of charge to store a personal watercraft to field #2 lessees only.
8. Lessee agrees to comply with all applicable state laws, city and county ordinances, University of Wisconsin regulations, Wisconsin Union policies and procedures, and with all orders issued by Wisconsin Union employees.
9. Per Wisconsin Union Policy FR1-5, lessee agrees not to serve or dispense alcoholic beverages from their boat while it is docked at any Wisconsin Union pier.
10. The Wisconsin Union retains the right to relocate Lessee's buoy location or to require Lessee to shift their boat from one buoy to another. The Wisconsin Union retains absolute discretion over the assignment of buoys. Use of any buoy other than that assigned by the Union to Lessee is an explicit ground for unilateral termination of this agreement.
11. The term of this agreement is for one season, duration of which is set forth in clause #3 (above). This agreement carries no implicit or explicit guarantees to future availability of mooring sites, nor is the Wisconsin Union under any obligation to provide special notification of mooring availability.
12. To preserve the integrity of the mooring fields, the Wisconsin Union reserves the right to unilaterally terminate this agreement at any point throughout the season for any reason.
13. If Lessee does not remove any boat moored to the buoy covered by this agreement by the end of the rental period set forth in clause #3 (above) the Lessee authorizes the Wisconsin Union to remove the boat from the mooring. In this event, Lessee shall be liable for and agrees to pay a fifty dollar (\$50.00) per day storage fee in addition to any expenses incurred in removing the boat. Lessee authorizes the Wisconsin Union to retain possession of the boat until the storage fee has been paid.