Coast Guard, Partner Agencies Recover 1,300 Pounds of Marijuana Near Catalina Island



About 1,300 pounds of marijuana is shown at Coast Guard Station Los Angeles-Long Beach, which was seized by the station’s crew near Catalina Island. U.S. Coast Guard

SAN PEDRO,
Calif. – The U.S. Coast Guard and partner agencies responded to a report of
multiple bales of narcotics in the water near Santa Catalina Island on Aug. 13,
the Coast Guard 11th District said in a release.

A
concerned citizen notified Coast Guard Sector Los Angeles-Long Beach
watchstanders, reporting multiple bales of what the caller believed to be
narcotics floating near Santa Catalina Island.

A Coast
Guard Station Los Angeles-Long Beach 45-foot response boat-medium crew and a Baywatch
Isthmus boat crew responded to investigate.

Coast
Guard and Baywatch crews recovered 43 bales from the water. The bales were
transferred to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, who confirmed the bales
consisted of marijuana weighing about 1,300 pounds with an estimated street value

of $1 million.

“We appreciate the assistance provided by our partners and vigilant mariners in keeping these drugs off of our streets,” said Lt. Andrew L. Fox, the Station Los Angeles-Long Beach commanding officer. “We encourage anyone who sees suspicious activity on the water, signs of distress, or hazards to navigation to contact Coast Guard Sector Los Angeles Long Beach personnel on VHF channel 16 or at (310) 521-3801.”

The origin of the bales is unknown. The case remains under investigation by agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations and the Coast Guard Investigative Service.

Response to the report was coordinated through an interagency structure known as a regional coordinating mechanism (ReCoM). Located in San Diego, Los Angeles and San Francisco, the ReCoM partnerships include the Coast Guard, CBP’s Office of Air and Marine Operations and Office of Field Operations, U.S. Border Patrol and ICE’s Homeland Security Investigations, in cooperation with state and local law enforcement partners operating along the California coast.