



It's a Family Affair

Two Families - Sea Tow Franchise Owners - Ensure Peace of Mind for Keys Boaters

When paradise is calling, the crystal-clear water and beautiful sunrises and sunsets of the Florida Keys are the answer. The area is a major destination for boaters and water activities.

When surrounded by the fun and beauty, it's hard to think that anything could go wrong, but if it does two local families – also owners of the local Sea Tow franchises in the area – are always at the ready. Those families are Steve and Cheryl Powers, owners of Sea Tow Key Largo; and Chris and Alexa Ward, owners of Sea Tow franchises covering Islamorada to Key West.

"It's definitely a family affair down here in the Keys," said Cheryl Powers. "We often talk to Chris and Alexa (Ward) and work together to ensure that the area is covered.

But if you happen to navigate unfamiliar waterways and run aground, or experience any issues with your boat, peace of mind on the water is what the two Sea Tow families focus on. That goes for both visitors to the area and locals.

"The Keys can sometimes be tricky for boaters, even for locals," said Chris Ward.



"Sometimes we're providing advice on the best fishing spots and other times we're making a rescue. Regardless, we strive to be the local resource offering experience and knowledge in many different categories."

The Powers Family

Steve Powers was born and raised in Stuart, Florida and grew up a free-range kid loving the outdoors and the water.

While Steve spent 20 years in the corporate world and moved around the country, the ocean, and Florida, kept calling him back. "The whole time I was working in the corporate world, I always dreamt of coming back to Florida," Steve said. "While I had visited the Keys as a kid, Sea Tow is what essentially brought me and my family here and it changed our lives."

It was a huge leap of faith when Steve made the move with his wife Cheryl and their three kids, but one that paid off. "I left my job, even though I was in a comfortable position," he said. "I always wanted to own and operate my own business, and this gave me the opportunity to do it. The experience from the corporate job gave me the tools to run it. Looking back today, I wouldn't trade it for anything."

The Ward Family

Operating Sea Tow franchises from Islamorada to Key West are Chris Ward and his wife Alexa. A Coral Shores graduate, Chris joined the Navy directly after high school, before becoming a captain in Hawaii for several years. After living on the islands, he transferred back to the mainland, and started working for Sea Tow in Destin, Florida.

A few years later, Chris transferred to Sea Tow Palm Beach and eventually the opportunity arose for him to purchase the southern area Sea Tow franchises down to Key West. "And the rest is history!" he said. "I love working for Sea Tow because, while helping people is great, it's a different situation every day, and you really have to



use your mind, experience and skills. It's why my Captains love it so much; no two days are ever the same."

Cheryl noted that when local boaters purchase Sea Tow memberships, their money stays locally in the community. It allows their families to be involved in Rotaries and Chambers and offer boating classes for Keys kids along with many other community activities.

As a member of Sea Tow, for \$179 a year, you have 365 days of on-water assistance. "It's probably the cheapest thing on your boat," Chris said. "The Keys are very tourist-based and the waters are very different than what many travelers are used to. A Sea Tow Captain is just a phone call away and gives locals and tourists a peace of mind."

For more information about Sea Tow in the Florida Keys, you can visit their website, seatow.com or call 1-800-4SEATOW (800-473-2869).

*Sarah Gagliardo - Angler, Writer, Cook,
& Florida Keys Enthusiast*