



small craft advisory

SEPT/OCT 2005 VOL.20 - NO.5

national association of state boating law administrators

**Bounty of Boating
Education Programs
Available**

Education Standards Evolve

**New Approval Process
for Boating Courses**



Produced under a grant from the Aquatic Resources (Wallop-Breaux) Trust Fund administered by the U.S. Coast Guard





Randy Edwards
NASBLA President



The official publication of the National Association of
State Boating Law Administrators

Looking Forward For Education

This issue of *Small Craft Advisory* addresses various facets of boater education. We all know that boater education works and works well.

In 1973 there were 1,754 boating-related fatalities. At that time there were approximately 6.3 million registered boats and none of the states had any form of mandatory boater education.

According to records kept by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the first mandatory boater education program was implemented in the late 1980s. The first four states to earn the Board's State Advocacy Award for their acceptance and completion of NTSB recommendations issued to improve recreational boating safety – including mandatory education – were Maryland (1988), Vermont (1991), Connecticut (1992) and Alabama (1994).

In 2004, we saw a record low of 676 fatalities, in spite of the fact that boat registrations had increased to 12,781,476. This remarkable decline in fatalities is a testament to the value and effectiveness of boater education programs. According to records kept by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, 44 states and territories now have some form of mandatory boater education. Boater education is working and being delivered in a variety of ways. As technology grows and further develops, so shall our delivery options and opportunities. We have only scratched the surface.

I find it interesting when many folks say that they “don’t have the time” to do this or that. We must all remember – we have *all the time there is*. It is a matter of *how we choose to spend our time* that matters. As educators, we must be cognizant of that fact. Like it or not, we must be flexible and responsive to the needs of the boating public. We must find ways to deliver safety education to them *when and how* they prefer to receive it. That is our challenge for the future.

We must be proactive if we are to continue to grow and educate the boating community. We must be sensitive to the fact there are many things for people to be doing – and many ways for them to be spending their valuable time, and we don’t want to discourage them from

boating by not meeting their needs in as many ways as we can.

As boating educators, we can and should be very proud of our record of success. Yet, we must never be satisfied that we have done enough. Together, we shall successfully meet the demands and challenges that face us in the future.

Well, this will be my last “From the Helm” article as NASBLA President. This past year has been a truly extraordinary experience for me. I want to thank everyone who helped me along the way – and that list is long. I have learned a great deal about so many things. I’ve met many new friends and partners.

I particularly want to thank the members of the NASBLA Executive Board. They have worked tirelessly to make our organization better by seeing the need for change and taking action in developing our strategic plan and moving it forward. Our organization will be better for it. Please make a point to thank Fred Messmann, immediate past president; Charlie Sledd, vice president; Jeff Johnson, treasurer; James Horan, WSBA president; Jerome Madrid, SSBLAA president; Brian Kempf, NABA president; John Simmons, member-at-large; and Lucia Francis, member-at-large. They have worked hard for you. I hope you are pleased with our progress.

I must also thank and commend the committee chairs and committee members for their valuable time and extraordinary efforts. They are the workhorses of this organization. The chairs during my term were Jim Graybeal (Law Enforcement), Ray Tsuneyoshi (Waterways Management), John Fetterman (Homeland Security), Jeff Johnson (Paddlesports), Ron Jendro (Boats & Associated Equipment), Stephanie Weatherington (Boating Accident Investigation, Reporting & Analysis), Rick Barrera (Numbering & Titling) and Betsy Woods (Education). What a group of truly talented and dedicated individuals.

Thank you for allowing me to represent you as President of our organization this past year. It has truly been a pleasure and a privilege to serve you. Let’s keep moving ahead. Stay safe out there.



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© Small Craft Advisory (ISSN: 1066-2383) Published bimonthly by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, 1500 Leestown Rd, Suite 330, Lexington, KY 40511 (six issues). Subscription is \$12 annually. Contact NASBLA for permission to reprint articles, 859.225.9487. Send change of address to Small Craft Advisory, 1500 Leestown Road, Suite 330, Lexington KY 40511.

ABOUT THE COVER

Boating classes take a variety of forms, giving recreational boaters numerous choices for learning to boat safely. From the traditional classroom setting to the increasingly popular Internet to hands-on boating events, boating safety officials strive to reach as many boaters as possible with safety messages.

Photo by Deb Rose, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Aquatic Resources Trust Fund Finally Reauthorized

After much negotiation and numerous extensions, the Aquatic Resources (Wallop-Breaux) Trust Fund has been reauthorized, generating much-needed funding for boating and fishing programs.

On July 29, 2005, President Bush signed into law H.R. 3, the \$268.5 billion "Highway Bill," which includes reauthorization of the Aquatic Resources (Wallop-Breaux) Trust Fund.

A number of Congressmen and Senators, as indicated below, became champions in the struggle to achieve reauthorization. These lawmakers were diligent in their support and guidance to assure that the provisions brought forward by the American League of Anglers and Boaters were included in the legislation. Of particular importance was the recovery of a portion of the marine fuel tax that had been directed to other programs.

Established in 1984, the Wallop-Breaux Trust Fund is funded with money collected through federal excise taxes on powerboat and small-engine fuels, excise taxes on sport fishing equipment, and import duties on recreational boats and fishing equipment. It provides money to support such programs as outreach, boating safety, and sport fish conservation and enhancement.

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) expired Sept. 30, 2003. This legislation was sustained by a series of short-term extensions while negotiations continued between Congress and the White House over several issues in the overall bill, none of which were related to reauthorization of Wallop-Breaux.

During the lengthy extensions and debate, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators collaborated with numerous boating safety interests to voice support for the reauthorization.

In February 2005, U.S. Sens. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) introduced a bill to reauthorize the fund. Congressman Clay Shaw (R-Florida) was instrumental in the effort to regain the misdirected fuel tax money. On July 29,

2005, President George W. Bush signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This legislation includes language reauthorizing the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (ARTF) through September 30, 2009.

During the reauthorization, the fund was reconfigured so that each Wallop-Breaux program will receive funding based on a percentage of the entire account. Renamed as the "Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund," the revised program will provide nearly \$600 million per year to boating safety, infrastructure and access programs, sport fish restoration and other important boating programs.

The five-year bill, the first major transportation spending measure since 1998, pays for projects from a portion of fiscal year 2005 through 2009.

The trust fund pays for a variety of state aquatic programs, including:

- *Boating safety education and outreach*
- *Enforcement of boating safety laws*
- *Development and maintenance of boating access facilities*
- *Development of marine sanitation facilities*
- *Acquisition and improvement of sport fish habitat*
- *Stocking of fish*
- *Fisheries research*
- *Surveys and inventories of sport fish populations*
- *Outreach and communications effort*



Safe Boating Seal Available

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) promotes boating safety in a myriad of ways. Those who offer boating safety courses have learned about NASBLA's education standards. Lawmakers have made use of the organization's model acts. Law enforcement officers have advanced their skills through various NASBLA training seminars.

Another way NASBLA promotes safe boating is by offering the Seal of Safe Boating Practices. This endorsement is used to encourage producers of boating media to adhere to the highest standards in quality boating safety information. The seal provides recognition and endorsement for worthy boating publications, videos, films, CD-ROMs and other media that are not considered a boating safety course.



To be considered for the endorsement, a product must portray safe boating practices. NASBLA offers the following guidelines:

- Show all people on board vessels wearing life jackets.
- Boats and equipment used should be in optimal condition.
- Show safe body positions for operator and passengers.
- Show boats operating in a safe manner.
- Do not show alcohol consumption.
- If unsafe behavior is shown to make a point of boating safety, that point should be clear.

For more information on the Seal of Safe Boating Practices, visit www.nasbla.org or call 859.225.9487.



U.S. Coast Guard Reminds Boaters: *You're in Command* Aboard Your Personal Watercraft

By John M. Malatak, Chief, Program Operations Division, U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety

As the fall season is upon us, many boaters are planning one last outing before the swimsuits are packed away, the boats go up on the "hard pan," and the personal watercraft (PWCs), canoes, kayaks and sailboats go back into storage.

So, as boaters prepare to take their PWCs out for one last weekend of family fun, they are urged to remember "You're in Command" – you are driving a fun-filled and, at times, fast boat.

Although not as visible as their larger boat cousins, personal watercraft have become increasingly popular in recreational boating areas since exploding onto the market in the late 1980s and early 1990s. While sales of the vessels peaked in 1995, current statistics indicate that these recreational boats are still making a splash with approximately 80,000 units sold annually. In total, the Personal Watercraft Industry Association (PWIA) estimates that in any given year, 20 million Americans own, rent or borrow a PWC to enjoy fun on the water.

According to the PWIA, PWCs maintain a high safety rating – 90 percent accident-free every year. However, the Coast Guard reminds boaters that when operating these vessels, the standard safety tenets represented in the "You're in Command. Boat Responsibly!" initiative still apply:

1. Always wear a life jacket.
2. Never boat under the influence (BUI).
3. Take a boating education course.
4. Get a vessel safety check (VSC).

In order to promote these safety messages to the millions of Americans who enjoy PWCs, the U.S. Coast Guard, in collaboration with the American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC), recently produced

a safety brochure, entitled, "Know...Before You Go!"

Advice outlined in the brochure includes:

1. Always attach your engine shut-off lanyard.
2. Never allow passengers to ride in front of the operator.
3. Always stay clear of the intake grate and water jet.
4. Scan constantly for swimmers, objects and other watercraft.

While including tips specific to PWC operators such as these, the main message of the brochure is that because these vessels share the waters with their larger boat cousins, it's important that PWC operators



know and follow the same rules that all boaters should obey on the water.

Personal watercraft have given millions the opportunity to experience the exhilaration of being on the water. But, even in these smaller vessels, getting on the water without following safety precautions can quickly spell disaster for those just trying to have a fun day on the water.

To download a copy of the brochure or order printed copies, visit <http://www.uscgboating.org/articles/boatingview.aspx?id=89>.

To learn more about personal watercraft safety or boating laws in your area, contact the following organizations:

U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety
www.uscgboating.org

National Association of
State Boating Law Administrators
www.nasbla.org

National Safe Boating Council
www.safeboatingcouncil.org

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
www.cgaux.org

United States Power Squadrons®
www.usps.org

The U.S. Coast Guard is asking all boat owners and operators to help reduce fatalities, injuries, property damage, and associated healthcare costs related to

recreational boating accidents by taking personal responsibility for their own safety and the safety of their passengers. Essential steps include always wearing a life jacket and requiring passengers to do the same; never boating under the influence; completing a boating safety course; and

getting a free vessel safety check annually from local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or United States Power Squadrons® vessel examiners. The U.S. Coast Guard reminds all boaters, "You're in Command. Boat Responsibly!"

For more information, visit:
www.USCGboating.org
www.safeboatingcouncil.org
www.VesselSafetyCheck.org

Information is also available by calling the U.S. Coast Guard Infoline at 800.368.5647.

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Longtime NASBLA Member Continues Focusing on Education, Safety

The American Kawasaki Motorcycle Corp. was founded in March 1966. According to the information on their website, www.kawasaki.com, the company started with practically nothing – no customers, no distributors and no image. But they had something more important – a strong desire to succeed and a promise from the factory to supply the best products.

The new corporation negotiated with several private companies around the United States to distribute the first bikes, which were sold under the brand name Omega. But U.S. riders wanted more excitement, so Kawasaki responded with a pair of potent rotary valve twins. This was the first indication that Kawasaki would become a company specializing in high-performance fun.

A second operation, Eastern Kawasaki Motorcycle Corp., had been established to handle east coast distribution. In 1968, this firm and the original Chicago company merged to form Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A. in Southern California.

In 1973 Kawasaki pioneered the personal watercraft business. And the 1980s saw further expansion into ATVs and utility vehicles.

Kawasaki joined NASBLA nearly 20 years ago, after participating (as a member



Twenty million Americans enjoy personal watercraft each year, according to a government survey. Available in many styles and sizes, these vessels offer families a convenient, affordable, high-performance way to recreate on the water. Photo courtesy Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A.

of the Personal Watercraft Industry Association) in what was then the North Central regional meeting in Gettysburg, Penn.

During this meeting, the Kawasaki representatives presented information about the still-small but growing personal watercraft (PWC) market and provided a demonstration opportunity that gave most attendees their first-ever hands-on exposure to PWCs. While there was some understandable skepticism about PWCs, it clearly marked a turning point toward acceptance of these new craft as part of the boating community.

“Because Kawasaki has a long involvement in education and training with our other products,” said Kawasaki’s

Public Affairs Director Roger Hagie, “we were immediately drawn to the educational mission of NASBLA, and (unlike some in the marine industry at that time) quickly grew to see the benefits of mandatory education.”

It was also at this conference that the seed was planted for what became, a little over a year later, the PWC industry’s first Public Safety Loan program.

“It quickly became obvious to Kawasaki that the twin efforts of education and enforcement were the most effective way to improve boating safety (and the boating experience),” said Hagie.

Kawasaki has benefited from its NASBLA membership through the opportunity to build relationships with the boating education and law enforcement community. These relationships have helped shape Kawasaki’s subsequent education initiatives: a series of in-crate videos and printed materials that have been widely distributed to state and other authorities for use in safety and education programs, the refinement of the loan program, and the corporation’s current sponsored online boating education course, PWCSafetySchool.com.

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State Legislators Ride Kawasaki Watercraft

Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A., provided two of its latest JET SKI watercraft for product rides at the annual American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) conference.

The product familiarization is part of the Personal Watercraft Industry Association’s (PWIA) effort to acquaint state political leaders with the fun and enjoyment of boating. This year’s ALEC conference was held on the shores of Lake Grapevine near Dallas, Texas.

More than 75 legislators from dozens of states took advantage of the opportunity to ride the 2005 Kawasaki STX®-15F and the 2005 STX-12F. This was the second consecutive year that Kawasaki has participated with the PWIA and the state legislators to showcase the latest JET SKI watercraft technology.

NASBLA President Presents Award

In May 2005, NASBLA President Randy Edwards presented Capt. Scott Evans with the NASBLA President's Award. Capt. Evans received this honor in recognition of his leadership and commitment to promoting boating safety as a valued partner of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators in his role as chief of the U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Boating Safety.

In July 2001, Capt. Evans was appointed chief of the Coast Guard's Office of Boating Safety. For more than three years, he provided the guidance and leadership required to carry out the development, coordination and implementation of a National Recreational Boating Safety Program and to lead the Coast Guard's efforts at reducing fatalities, injuries and property losses in recreational boating in the United States.

An avid boater, Capt. Evans has owned various boats since age 12. He has sailed the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes, and the Caribbean. This experience, along with

having visited nearly all 50 states, has given him a diverse background that helps him relate to the unique needs of the recreational boating public throughout the United States.

A 1979 graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Capt. Scott Evans served as a search and rescue helicopter pilot for over 21 years. His assignments included Savannah, Ga.; Chicago, Ill.; Mobile, Ala.; Corpus Christi, Texas; Los Angeles, Calif.; Pensacola, Fla.; Boston, Mass.; and the American Embassy in Nassau, the Bahamas.

Following his term as chief of the Office of Boating Safety, Capt. Evans was appointed to a new position. The Operations Policy Directorate (G-OP) created the position of deputy director in October 2004 to support the director in the oversight of the eight offices comprising (G-OP).

Earlier this year, Capt. Evans retired from the Coast Guard and has since been selected as executive director of Sail America, the sailing trade industry group.

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Capt. Scott Evans, former chief of the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety, receives the NASBLA President's Award from Randy Edwards, president of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. The award recognizes Capt. Evans' leadership and commitment to promoting boating safety.
Staff photo

West Virginia Scouts Earn Award

While West Virginia's Monongahela River is pretty far from the sea, a crew of Sea Scouts from Westover, W.Va., still had what it takes to win the BoatU.S. National Sea Scout Flagship Award for 2005.

Eight members of the crew, two adults and six youth, traveled to Dallas, Texas, to accept the Flagship trophy May 27 at the Boy Scouts of America Annual Meeting. Record-breaking around-the-world sailor and aviator and BSA Venturing Committee Chair Steve Fossett presented the Flagship Award on behalf of BoatU.S. along with Charles Holmes, director of BSA's Venturing Division. This is the fourth year for the Flagship Award, originated by BoatU.S. in 2002 to mark the 90th anniversary of Sea Scouting and the first time given to a non-coastal Ship.

Sea Scout Ship 46, Arcturus, of Westover, W.Va., ranked tops in the nation for its excellence in program quality, youth achievement and adult commitment. Like all Sea Scout units, Ship 46 uses boats, seamanship and nautical skills to develop character and leadership qualities in young people.

The ship, with 20 male and female Scouts, aged 14 to 20, made attaining the Flagship Award its mission for all of 2004. In the process the Ship compiled an impressive record of accomplishments, including 47 days of on-water activities. These ranged from formal training in boating handling, rules of the road and safety drills to boat maintenance, electronics and engine repair with a good measure of fun thrown in, such as water skiing and tubing.

In addition to operating its 36-foot Chris Craft Cavalier on the river and sailing small boats on nearby lakes, Ship 46 doesn't let the inland location keep its Scouts off the high seas. Last year, the young people organized a two-week bare boat charter in the British Virgin Islands aboard a Beneteau 50 sloop.

Sea Scouting is a co-ed program for young adults age 14-20 and nearly 7,000 youth participate in 550 Ships nationwide. For more information, contact SeaScouts@BoatUS.com.

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Iowa Water Patrol Officers Save Boater

On July 23, 2005, at 5:00 p.m., seasonal Water Patrol Officers Matt Bruner and Bill Wineland, with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), were patrolling on Saylorville Lake in Polk County. As they headed south near the Cherry Glen boat ramp, both officers noticed a yellow personal watercraft floating about 80 feet off shore with no one on it. As they passed the unoccupied vessel, Officer Bruner noticed a life jacket in the water. As Officer Wineland looked closer at the jacket, he thought he saw a body, but they could only see the back of the jacket, and it was low in the water.

The officers quickly approached the life jacket and determined that there was a person in it. Officer Wineland quickly notified the state radio dispatcher of the situation and requested rescue units be sent immediately. On his third attempt, Officer Bruner reached the subject and rolled him over in the water. Officer Wineland then observed a quarter-sized wound to the subject's right temple.

Officer Wineland began guiding the boat to shore while Officer Bruner held on to the subject. As they neared the shore, Officer Bruner began having difficulty holding onto the subject in the choppy water. He jumped into the water and continued to pull the subject toward shore. Officer Wineland updated state radio as



Iowa Water Patrol Officers Bill Wineland and Matt Bruner on routine patrol on Saylorville Lake in Polk County. Photo courtesy Iowa DNR

they neared the shore, beached the patrol boat, retrieved his pocket CPR mask from his bag and jumped into the water. The officers got the subject to shore and placed him on his back. Both officers quickly checked for a pulse. They determined that the subject did not have a pulse and was not breathing. Officer Wineland began rescue breathing while Officer Bruner did chest compressions. After four repetitions,

the subject's pulse came back regular and strong and he also began breathing at a regular rate, but in a gasping manner.

The officers continued to monitor the victim until help arrived and took over the medical care. The victim, later identified as Nicholas Evans of West Des Moines, was transported to Mercy Hospital where he made a full recovery.

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In Memory

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) is sad to announce the loss of Lynda Henriksen, a dedicated member and active participant in the organization's Numbering & Titling Committee.

Lynda died on July 17, 2005, from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident in Olympia, Washington.

Born on December 12, 1953 at Larson Air Force Base Hospital in the state of Washington, Lynda attended school at McChord Air Force Base; Toul Rosiers, France; Sembach, Germany; and Dysart High School in Glendale, Arizona. She completed high school at Tumwater



Lynda Henriksen

High. Lynda married Doug Henriksen on May 9, 1981, after her previous marriage ended in divorce. Together she and Doug had a mixed family of four children.

She was employed by the Washington State Department of Licensing for almost 30 years.

"Lynda's work and the people she worked with were a big part of her life. She was a friend, a colleague and a leader who will be greatly missed," said Deb McCurley, administrator with the Department of Licensing.

She was active in her church and served on the Board of the Mountain View Church of the Nazarene for many years. Lynda loved people and her church

family. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, daughter and sister.

While not directly involved in boating safety, Lynda was dedicated to the field.

"She was a great asset to the [Numbering & Titling] committee, particularly in its consideration of the Uniform Certificate of Title Act developed by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws," said Ron Sarver, NASBLA's deputy director.

In addition to her work with the committee, Lynda was also active with the Western States Boating Administrators Association.

The family suggests memorials be made to the Olympia Union Gospel Mission, PO Box 7668, Olympia, WA 98507-7668.

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Meet Bobber the Water Safety Dog

By Kimberly Hermes

Bobber the Water Safety Dog is continuing on his journey to help educate children about the importance of practicing safe boating and swimming habits while recreating on and around water. He's just released a new cartoon to teach kids about the importance of wearing a life jacket.

Bobber is the animated spokesdog for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' water safety campaign. Water safety is an integral part of the Corps' mission, and Bobber helps relay water safety messages to the public through the website www.bobber.info.

Using cartoons and games, Bobber and his safety messages are geared primarily toward children. However, as children share what they've learned with friends and family, Bobber's messages reach adults as well.

The Bobber cartoons consist of different characters that get into trouble while boating and swimming. Luckily, Bobber the



Water Safety Dog is always around to rescue them and encourage them to be safe. Two puppies, Corkey and Sinker, and an old, grumpy bulldog named Tackle are the cartoon's star performers.

The puppies demonstrate swimming safety lessons. Corkey sets the good example, while Sinker, as his name implies, has a tendency to sink and has to be rescued by Bobber. Tackle, a retired football mascot who lives in a doghouse boat and fishes for

catfish, demonstrates a lack of boating safety. By making water safety mistakes and having his cartoon friends help and correct him, the water safety message permeates the entertainment and interest supplied by the characters.

Bobber the Water Safety Dog was created for the Corps' National Water Safety Program by Toby Isbell, a visual information specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District. Don Harris, chief of management support branch in Fort Worth District for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, supplies the voices for the characters in the cartoons.

In addition to Bobber's second cartoon, the Corps of Engineers has recently finished a new coloring book featuring the talking dog. The coloring book will be available through the Corps National Water Safety Program and lake office sources starting December 1, 2005.

"Our plan is to continue rounding out the Bobber program to include at least two more water safety-themed cartoons, a few games, downloadable coloring sheets, posters and more," said Lynda Nutt, with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers National Operations Center for Water Safety. "We'd eventually like to have the entire package available on CD."

For more information on the Corps of Engineers' National Water Safety Program, visit <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil>.

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Water and Boating Safety Tips from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

- Learn to swim.
- Never rely on toys such as inner tubes and water wings to stay afloat.
- Don't take chances, by over estimating your swimming skills.
- Swim only in designated swimming areas.
- Never swim alone.
- Know your boat and know the rules of the road. Take a safe boating course.
- Check your boat for all required safety equipment.
- Don't overload the boat.
- If you will be in a powerboat, check your electrical system and fuel system for gas fumes.
- Follow manufacturer's suggested procedures BEFORE starting up the engine.
- Wear your life jacket – don't just carry one on board.
- Leave the alcohol behind.
- Check the weather forecast.
- File a float plan with a member of your family or friend.

Kids Learn Boating Safety at Camp WADE

By Kimberly Hermes

The Houston (Texas) Safe Boating Council Inc. has developed a remarkable boating safety program for kids. It's so remarkable that, in March 2005, the National Safe Boating Council selected its creators to receive the annual Boating Safety Youth Program Award.

This award recognizes individuals and organizations that have developed and successfully implemented innovative youth boating education programs targeting safety issues and concerns of national interest.

The award-winning Camp WADE is a water safety event developed for teens ages 14 to 18. With WADE standing for "Water Activity Day Events," the camp offers three days of classroom instruction along with in-the-water, hands-on training in the operation of powerboats, sailboats, kayaks and personal watercraft. Segments on personal flotation devices, legal requirements, trailering, aids to navigation and vessel maintenance are also covered.

Sponsored by the Houston Safe Boating Council and the Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, the day-camp was created to increase water-safety awareness among young people. This, in turn, would increase safety on the area's waterways.

"By putting better educated boaters with better attitudes on the waterways, we believe that the public waters are a safer place to recreate," said Russell Grimes, senior police officer with the Houston Police Department and president of the Houston Safe Boating Council. Grimes gave a well-attended presentation on the program during the 2005 International Boating and Water Safety Summit. He later accepted the program's award on behalf of the Houston Safe Boating Council.

Camp WADE classes are held on three consecutive days from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Following a swim test – administered to determine each student's comfort level

in the water – the students are presented the material in a round robin atmosphere.

First, the students receive classroom instruction in handling procedures, Texas boating laws and boating courtesy. Next, the students go to the water to test their newly learned skills and knowledge. At the end of the session, the students take a written and skills test and, upon course completion, receive their Texas Boater Basic Certification by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Division.

"The WADE program was designed to be used by anyone that has knowledge of water safety and boating and the desire to impart that knowledge to young people," said Grimes.

For more information on Camp WADE, call the Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce at 281.488.7676.

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Award Available for Youth-Oriented Boating Education Programs

If you are involved with a kids' boating safety program, consider entering it in an awards competition. In 2006, the National Safe Boating Council will select one national recipient for its annual Boating Safety Youth Program Award. This award is bestowed on an individual or organization which has created and implemented a high-quality youth-oriented boating education program.

The goal of the Boating Safety Youth Program Award is to encourage the development of innovative boating safety education programs directed at youth. An additional goal is to make these original programs available and to encourage their use in many areas.

The award includes a cash grant to be used for the implementation or enhancement of a youth boating education program. The grant may be used to purchase necessary safety equipment, audio visual aids, printing, teaching aids, program promotion and advertisement, rental time of pool or waterfront facilities, transportation costs to on-water sites, and other costs associated with the advancement of the program.

To be considered for this award, download the application posted online at www.safeboatingcouncil.org. The deadline for applications is December 31, 2005.

Award applications will be evaluated by NSBC staff based on criteria that includes a program description, budget proposal and availability of the program to be duplicated by others. For a youth boating program to qualify, it must integrate safety practices into the program and be aimed at

students under 18 years of age. Selection priority will be given to unique or innovative programs with the primary goal of increasing boating safety awareness among youth.

To receive the award, successful applicants must agree to attend the 2006 International Boating and Water Safety Summit and present a session on their award-winning youth program. The 2006 Summit will be held April 30-May 3, 2006, in Palm Harbor, Fla. Travel, two nights' lodging and subsistence based on federal allowance will be covered for a representative of the award winner.

For more information, visit www.safeboatingcouncil.org.



Russell Grimes (center), with the Houston Police Department accepts the Boating Safety Youth Award on behalf of the Houston Safe Boating Council. Laurie Fried, representative from West Marine, and Ed Carter, chairman of the NSBC, presented the award to Grimes for the council's youth boating safety education program, Camp WADE. West Marine is the proud sponsor the Boating Safety Youth Award Program.

The Evolution of the Standards Movement

By Gail R. Kulp

If we can say anything about the 20th century, it is that it was an era of standards. Although the 20th century ended, the standards movement is still going strong. We see standards being implemented in all aspects of our lives.

The movie industry has recently agreed on the standard of recording movies to a digital format when filming. The Web Standards Project is fighting for standards that will ensure that everyone has simple and affordable access to the World Wide Web. Even the paper that this article has been printed on is standardized based on the paper's size and the ink quality. However, we aren't the only ones being exposed to the standards movement.

Our children, in public schools across the country, deal with standards as well. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, the standards movement has finally tried to standardize people. According to the No Child Left Behind Act, by the 2013-14 school year, all children across the country will be passing their state assessments at 100 percent proficiency.

Unlike the food we eat and the cars we drive, children can never be standardized. A farmer could easily grow 100 rows of corn and each ear will have a slightly different number of kernels, but the corn will still taste the same and look the same to the average person. The same cannot be said for our children. We cannot ensure that all of our children will be raised and nurtured in the same way. Yet, according to the new standards movement in education, all children should be able to achieve perfect scores on their tests by 2013. This isn't possible.

There is nothing wrong with the Standards Movement in Education, but the legislators are going about it from the wrong angle. Instead of trying to standardize the children's test scores, they should be standardizing the textbooks, curricula, and the teaching methods used with the children. If the Department of Education could prove that every textbook contained the same information and that every teacher was teaching the information in the same way, then education would become a standardized process. As of right now, however, the textbooks have different content in every school system and the

teachers convey the information in any way they choose. Therein lies the problem.

Maybe the legislators should take a closer look at the Boating Safety Education program. They might be surprised by how innovative our process is and all that it entails.

The standards movement came to the boating industry in 1998, and those who were involved in its inception have worked hard to standardize the courses – not the people. Based on empirical boating accident and violation statistics, the set of standards establishes a minimum body of knowledge necessary to maintain safe, legal and enjoyable boating.

When a boating safety course is submitted for review, it is exposed to a rigorous system of standards that it must meet in order to be approved. NASBLA's National Boating Education Standards document contains nine standards and close to a hundred sub-standards. A course that is missing just one of the sub-standards will not be accepted for approval.

The course provider is given the task of writing goals and learning objectives that cover each of the standards. These goals and learning objectives are then referenced using specific pages in the course textbook. Upon review, each



Seasonal Water Patrol Officer Heidi Jordet with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources reviews a boater education exam with a student.

Photo courtesy Iowa Department of Natural Resources

reference is cross-checked for accuracy and the entire textbook is read to ensure that no errors were inadvertently printed.

In addition, each course provider must create an exam consisting of at least 50 multiple-choice questions according to NASBLA's Testing Standards. During the review, each question on the final exam is read and the information pertained in the questions is evaluated for accuracy.

All of these steps are taken to ensure that only the best boating safety courses are being taught to the general public. Even though each boating safety course can have its own textbook and exam, the National Boating Education Standards makes certain that each textbook and exam covers the same information, which is drawn from the standards.

The standards do not prescribe the sequence of the course material; therefore, the course provider may organize the information as he or she prefers. The standards also allow a course provider to add additional information to a boating



An officer teaches boating safety in a traditional classroom-based boating education course. Photo courtesy Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks

safety course if the additional information can be shown to assist the boat operator in learning safe boating practices.

Although we have not solved all of the challenges that accompany the standards movement, the boating safety education community has shown that it is possible to standardize courses instead of people.

For more information on the national boating education standards, please visit www.nasbla.org and click on the link for "Education Course National Standards."



NASBLA Updates Course Approval Process

Nearly 120 boating courses are currently approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA).

What does this mean?

To be NASBLA-approved, a course must fulfill the minimum content standards required by the organization.

NASBLA developed its minimum content for boating education courses more than a decade ago. These standards have served as a guide for state, non-profit and commercial course providers to follow in developing boating education materials. In July 1998, NASBLA contracted with a research team anchored at the Pennsylvania State University to evaluate the existing guidelines and develop a new minimum "standard of care" for boating education.

Approved September 22, 1999, this new set of standards is intended to prescribe the minimum body of knowledge necessary to ensure safe, legal and enjoyable boating. In addition, the proposed standard of care is predicated on

reducing risk in recreational boating based on empirical accident and boating violation statistics.

NASBLA's National Boating Education Standards include nine standards and nearly one-hundred sub-standards. All standards and sub-standards must be met for a course to be approved.

Course Approval Process

With the hiring of Gail Kulp as its education director, NASBLA has streamlined its course approval process.

The first step for a course provider is to fill out a review application, education standards checklist and Appendices A-H, and submit them, along with the entire course, to NASBLA headquarters.

Kulp reviews the course for standards covering boat capacity, registration, equipment, trip planning and preparation, marine environment, safe boating operation, emergency preparedness, other water activities, and boat operator exams.

Upon approval, the course provider then sends the entire course to the proper

state authority for review of state-specific questions and any additional required state enhancements.

After approving the course, the state sends the entire course package to NASBLA with notice that the course is approved for the state. The Education Committee chairperson then issues an approval letter to the course provider.

If, at any time, during the review process the course is deemed incomplete, the course provider is notified of the deficiencies and given the opportunity to modify the course and resubmit it.

A list of all approved courses is maintained by NASBLA and is updated regularly on the NASBLA website at www.nasbla.org. In addition, all necessary forms for submitting a course for approval are available online.

For more information, visit www.nasbla.org or contact Gail Kulp at gail@nasbla.org or 859.225.9487.



Education Opportunities Abound

By Kimberly Hermes

Recreational boating remains a popular pastime in the United States. According to U.S. Coast Guard statistics, 12,781,476 boats were registered in America in 2004. It's estimated that more than 70 million people participate in recreational boating in this country every year.

Unfortunately, boating does have its risks. Last year, 676 boaters died in boat accidents on America's waters. The Coast Guard estimates that 70 percent of these deaths occurred on boats where the operator had not received any boating safety instruction.

It's increasingly important for boaters to learn boating skills and seamanship in order to maintain safety on the waterways. In addition to reducing the risks – loss of life, personal injury and property damage

– education increases boating enjoyment for outdoor enthusiasts.

Boater licensing and education is becoming more prevalent across the country. The *1988 Boating Safety Manual*, produced by the U.S. Coast Guard, shows that just 20 years ago no states mandated operator licensing or boating safety education. By 1996, four states – Maryland, Vermont, Connecticut and Alabama – required some type of licensing and 18 states mandated education. Today, 44 states and territories have implemented some type of mandatory boating safety education.

Boaters have numerous opportunities to learn about boating safety. With traditional teaching techniques, distance learning and outreach efforts, boater education is readily available.

A recent Coast Guard study shows that people are taking advantage of these educational offerings. In 2004 alone, 432,179 boaters earned their safe boating certification by completing courses approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA).

Tradition Remains Trendy

“Many people prefer the traditional classroom setting where they can directly interact with the instructor,” said Wayne Stacey, Education/Instruction Specialist with the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety.

Realizing this, boating organizations offer free or low-cost boating courses through traditional teaching techniques, i.e., classroom courses. Providing a



During a Boating and Water Safety Awareness course, Education Specialist Walt Dietz, with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, discusses how to properly fit a life jacket.

Photo courtesy Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

familiar learning environment for most people, these classes are usually taught either by agency employees or volunteers.

Often when folks think of a classroom, they think of children. Numerous states have initiated education efforts aimed at schoolchildren. More than 40 states now offer boating education in public schools. A couple examples of these school-based programs are described below.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's *Boating and Water Safety Awareness* course was developed to promote boating and water safety education among students. Geared toward those in grades 6-12, the eight-hour course involves both classroom and in-water work.

In class, students learn boat terminology, state boating waters, legal requirements, special water activities, fire prevention, required and recommended equipment, hazards to boaters, accident prevention, navigation rules, state operation requirements and aids to navigation. The in-water sessions include demonstrations and practice in the use of personal flotation devices, cold-water survival, rescue techniques and proper boat procedures.

The California Department of Boating and Waterways (Cal Boating) has also developed a successful boating program for public schools. The department developed its *AquaSMART* curriculum to educate school-age children about water safety. Course materials cover a variety of topics involving boating and aquatic safety. Nearly 500,000 elementary school students benefit from the *AquaSMART* education programs annually.

Cal Boating also disseminates the *AquaSMART Boating* program for high school students. Four types of boating are addressed: personal watercraft, power boating, sailing and paddling. The course is available to schools, aquatic centers and youth organizations. For more information, visit www.dbw.ca.gov.

Education isn't just for kids. Basic boating courses are available for boaters of all ages. Offered by various boating organizations, these courses typically take place for eight hours on a single day. Others are taught in two 4-hour sessions to give students time to absorb the large amount of subject matter being taught.



Community outreach is an important aspect in the education program developed by the Hawaii Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation. During National Safe Boating Week, boating safety specialists teach children and their parents about the importance of wearing a life jacket. Photo courtesy Hawaii Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation

Across the country, natural resource departments, conservation agencies, sheriff's offices, as well as private companies, offer basic classroom courses for boaters. These cover general information concerning boats and maintenance; information about boat safety equipment and how to make boating safer and more comfortable; boating safety tips; and state-specific boating laws and regulations.

The United States Power Squadrons (USPS) offers a comprehensive classroom course. The *Squadron Boating Course* presents the fundamentals of safe boat handling and operation and basic piloting. Designed to be of interest to the entire family, including children, the course can usually be completed in six two-hour classroom sessions.

Boat Smart, geared toward all boaters, from the angler in an outboard to the skipper of a cruiser or sailboat, is another course offered by the USPS. It covers the same safe boat handling and operation material as the *Squadron Boating Course* in eight hours. Many classes are offered in a single day and this course satisfies the state certification requirements.

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, in cooperation with the Power Squadrons, offers *Boating Safely*, an eight-hour, eight-

chapter course designed to appeal to hunters, anglers, personal watercraft operators and other boaters.

For those who want additional training after completing a basic course, various multi-lesson courses are available, including coastal navigation, personal watercraft safety, piloting, the global positioning system, sailing, paddlesports safety, powerboat handling and more.

From a Distance

In today's society, numerous activities vie for people's personal time. And so, finding time to sit through an eight-hour course is becoming increasingly difficult for boaters. For those with limited time for class, distance learning is an attractive option for boater education.

Many state and federal agencies, boating organizations and private companies now provide distance learning opportunities in the form of Internet courses, videos, CD-ROMs and home study manuals. These options allow boaters to learn in the comfort of their homes at a pace that fits into their busy lifestyles.

One such distance learning curriculum is America's Boating Course. It can be taken three ways: on the Internet, by studying an 80-page course manual or

with a CD-ROM. Designed for skippers and crew of all types of watercraft, America's Boating Course is a unique study program covering the fundamentals of boating. Boaters can complete the course with an online exam. Or, in states that require a proctored exam, boaters can work one-on-one with a local squadron.

With the rapid growth of the Internet, web-based courses are gaining popularity. Three years ago, about half of the 56 U.S. territories and states accepted certificates earned by passing an Internet-based boating safety course. Today, only about 10 states do not accept Internet course certificates.

Several private organizations offer online boating education courses. Some of the more popular NASBLA-approved courses are those available from BoatEd, the BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water, Marine University, American Boating Education and BoaterExam.com. Online courses reach thousands of boaters each year.

Reaching Out

While not constituting "formal education," and therefore not offering certification, numerous exhibits, parades, assemblies, activity-based programs and other events work to promote boating safety. These outreach efforts give boaters an opportunity to talk in person with and ask questions of law enforcement officers and boating safety specialists.

In addition to providing resources to boaters, such events can also provide non-boaters their first encounter with a boating activity. Piquing interest in new boaters is important for the growth of recreational boating.

A good example of an outreach venue is the North American Safe Boating Campaign, spearheaded by the National Safe Boating Council. This annual event began in 1957 as a grassroots outreach program and has developed into a large-scale, national campaign.

The campaign kicks off each year with National Safe Boating Week, which takes place during the first full week before Memorial Day weekend. To participate, boating organizations across the country plan an assortment of events and activities to promote boating safety to the public.



Past COMO Marilyn Coffman of Juneau, Alaska, points out local Aids to Navigation to students in the Boating Skills and Seamanship class. Photo courtesy U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

The North American Safe Boating Campaign is funded through a grant from the Aquatic Resources (Wallop-Breaux) Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard. For more information, visit www.safeboatingcouncil.org.

Another outreach effort is the Youth Education Program developed by the Ohio-based Spirit of America Foundation. The goal of this program is to extend and enhance curricula in public middle school to include hands-on training of watercraft and boating-related activities. Geared toward seventh-graders, the instruction helps students to develop self-esteem, teamwork skills, safe seamanship and boating practices.

The Oregon State Marine Board has also developed a curriculum for children. The Jr. Boater Program introduces concepts of boating and water safety to elementary and middle school children. It engages participants in fun, hands-on water and boating safety activities. For more information, visit www.boatoregon.com.

Editor's Note: Other outreach efforts targeting children, such as Bobber the Water Safety Dog, Kids KNOW and Camp W.A.D.E are discussed in this magazine. For

information, see the articles on pages 7, 8 and 14.

Boater Education Benefits All

Clearly, educational opportunities abound for boaters. The big obstacle to overcome is persuading boaters of their need for becoming educated.

Taking an approved boating safety course offers numerous benefits. First, participants learn boating safety skills, equipment requirements and pertinent laws. This helps them become better-informed resource-users.

Additionally, course participants learn how to avoid and prepare for boating emergencies. Consider the fact that almost 500 people died on boats where the operator had not received boating safety instruction. It's clear that this type of preparation is urgently needed on the country's waterways.



New Program Helps Kids KNOW About Water Safety

By Kimberly Hermes

Drowning remains the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related deaths among children ages 1 to 14, claiming more than 900 children's lives each year. What's worse is that almost 90 percent of drownings occurred when the child was being supervised.

In April 2005, research by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign (now known as Safe Kids Worldwide) and Johnson & Johnson shows that 88 percent of children who drowned were under the supervision of another person, usually a family member. *Supervision* was defined as being in the care of another individual, not necessarily in their direct line of sight.

Brian Colella has no trouble believing these facts. He almost drowned twice when growing up – once as a child when he jumped from a floating raft and again as a teen when he pushed off from a boat in deep water and could not make it back to shore. Fortunately, he was rescued both times.

Some children are not so lucky. And those are the children Colella hopes to save.

Colella joined the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as a volunteer reserve officer five years ago. This has proven to be an eye-opening experience for him.

"Living and working on the water has given me the opportunity to see some very frightening things. I can't believe how many adults in our country lack even basic knowledge about water safety," said Colella. "The vast number of water-related deaths could have been avoided if only adults and children had basic water safety knowledge."

The drowning death of a three-year-old Maryland boy last July intensified Colella's desire to help. The toddler told his dad he wanted to take a nap. His father removed the boy's life jacket. The boy fell asleep on the back of the boat, rolled off and drowned.

Immediately following the child's drowning, Colella's boss at Maryland DNR asked him to create a water safety poster. Not only did Colella make the poster but he also made water safety his own personal mission. He developed Kids Knowledge Necessary on Water – or the Kids KNOW® program – to educate children and their parents about water safety. The program covers water safety at home, at pools and in and around open water, boating safety, and ice and other winter hazards.

organized a Kids KNOW Water Safety Week for the first week in May. The week included various activities, educational presentations and boating safety courses for adults and children. The week concluded with the Kids KNOW Festival at a local state park.

Colella has some help administering the program. Cpl. Harry L. Rhule serves as coordinator for Kids KNOW. Together, Colella and Rhule have secured financial and donation commitments from various corporations for the water safety program. Through the generous support of these



Colella contacts area schools to set up appearances. Surprisingly, some school officials turn him down. He recounted that representatives at one school even told him that they weren't sure the program was necessary.

The schools who welcome Colella receive a well-organized, attention-grabbing presentation. He tries his best to impart his water safety message to the student. And he doesn't sugarcoat the message. Vanessa Franko, staff writer for *The Capital* newspaper in Annapolis, Md., described one of Colella's recent school visits:

During a recent appearance at Edgewater Elementary, hundreds of jaws dropped at once when the officer told students dramatic drowning stories about kids just like them.

Colella admitted, "I'll scare the living daylights out of them if it keeps them safe."

To promote water safety awareness outside of the schools he visits, Colella

sponsors, they were able to hand out free life jackets, body float suits, and other safety items during the inaugural Kids KNOW Water Safety Week and related festival.

In addition, they are giving out a free water safety packet to every child they can reach through retail stores, restaurants, marine stores, grocery stores and state agencies. In addition to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Florida Division of Recreation & Parks has adopted Kids KNOW.

Colella is seeking corporate sponsors and partners to help expand the program. His goal is to take it nationwide.

For more information about the Kids KNOW® program, visit www.kidsknow.org or call 866.569.KNOW (866.569.5669).

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Boating Participation Expected to Increase

While marine recreational participation rates in the United States are expected to decline, the actual number of participants is predicted to rise, according to the results of The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"This is due to the fact that forecasted population growth more than offsets projected declines in participation rates," NOAA explained in its report, *Projected Participation in Marine Recreation: 2005 & 2010*.

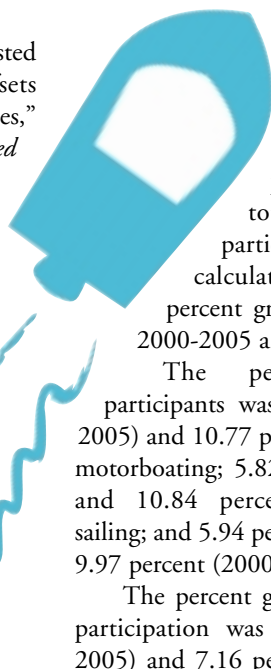
Motorboating participation is expected to grow from 15.95 million people in 2005 to 16.70 million in 2010, NOAA reported.

Motorboating participation rates are expected to decline from 7.04 percent this year to 6.97 percent in 2010.

Sailing participation is expected to jump from 6.69 million people this year to 7 million in 2010, while participation is expected to fall from

2.95 percent this year to 2.92 in 2010, according to NOAA.

Similarly, personal watercraft participation is predicted to increase from 5.77 million people to 5.99 million, while participation rates are expected to decline from 2.55 percent to 2.50 percent.



Using its projection of the number of participants and the total days of participation, NOAA also calculated the estimated percent growth over the periods 2000-2005 and 2000-2010.

The percent growth in participants was 5.77 percent (2000-2005) and 10.77 percent (2000-2010) for motorboating; 5.82 percent (2000-2005) and 10.84 percent (2000-2010) for sailing; and 5.94 percent (2000-2005) and 9.97 percent (2000-2010) for PWC use.

The percent growth in total days of participation was 4.08 percent (2000-2005) and 7.16 percent (2000-2010) for motorboating; 7.97 percent (2000-2005) and 14.33 percent (2000-2010) for sailing; and 5.67 percent (2000-2005) and 9.23 percent (2000-2010) for PWC use.

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BoatU.S. Safety Grant Applications Available

The BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety & Clean Water will give grants of up to \$4,000 to local community organizations for projects that focus on promoting safe boating practices. The Foundation has made \$40,000 in grant funding available. The deadline to apply is November 1, 2005.

Over the past 15 years the Foundation has awarded nearly \$650,000 in Safety Grant funds to organizations that develop innovative projects that promote safe boating on local waterways. Topics have ranged from creating literature on the

effects of boating under the influence to boat ramp signage informing users about free vessel safety checks.

Boat and yacht clubs, flotillas and squadrons that would like to apply for a grant may download an application and learn more about Boating Safety Grants please visit www.boatus.com/foundation/Grants/index.htm or call 703.461.2878 ext. 8353. The grants will be awarded in late January 2006.

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Oregon Deems Platform Dragging Illegal

Beginning in 2006, platform dragging – also known as teak surfing – will be illegal in Oregon.

Platform dragging is when a passenger hangs onto the rear of the boat to be pulled through the water until the boat's wake builds enough to allow body surfing.

Senate Bill 56, recently passed by the 2005 legislature, makes the activity illegal.

A number of dangers are associated with platform dragging. An obvious danger is the swimmer's proximity to the boat propeller. Another not-so-obvious danger is carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. In addition to these dangers, platform dragging is usually done without a life jacket because it inhibits body surfing. When combined, these elements create a very hazardous activity.

"One of the saddest stories I've heard involving CO poisoning and teak surfing, involved a dad and his five-year-old son," recalls Jyll Smith, public information officer for the Oregon State Marine Board. "The family was enjoying a fun filled day on the water. The adults were teak surfing and after numerous pleas from the son to be allowed to 'surf', the father gave in. Within minutes the little boy went under and drowned. I can't imagine the grief and guilt that father will carry with him for life."

A person who is platform dragging for just one minute could be exposed to 990 parts per million (ppm) concentration of carbon monoxide. This means that within an hour, the person could begin to experience headaches, dizziness and nausea. According to the World Health Organization, a level exceeding 87 ppm during a 15-minute interval is considered dangerous.

People who operate a motorboat with someone holding onto or occupying the portion of boat aft the transom could receive a maximum fine of \$360, under Oregon's new law.

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Coast Guard, Alaska State Troopers Do Their BEST

The U.S. Coast Guard and Alaska State Troopers worked together to conduct boaters' education and safety training (BEST) during the Fourth of July weekend on Big Lake.

Touted as Alaska's year-round playground, Big Lake is 60 miles north of Anchorage. The community of about 2,000 full-time residents receives a lot of summer and weekend recreation activity.

Crewmembers from the Coast Guard cutter Hickory, a 225-foot seagoing buoy tender based in Homer, were training and assisting Alaska State Troopers to keep the waters safe during the holiday weekend.

Members of the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety and Security Team (MSST) from Anchorage joined the effort on July 3. The MSST trailered one of six 25-foot defender class small boats from their base in Anchorage. The boat, built by SAFE Corporation, uses twin 225-horsepower outboard engines. The boat's speed was useful in pursuing and boarding personal watercraft and cigarette boats that were able to outrun the smaller trooper vessel.

The two teams worked together to board as many vessels as possible to cover the lake. The State Troopers can only board a vessel if they note a violation while on patrol, or if the members of the vessel

are engaged in fishing. The U.S. Coast Guard has the authority to board any vessel for any reason, however, and by having the troopers present, they can levy stricter fines for various violations, as well as deal with warrants that come back as a result of background checks.

During the course of the weekend, the teams boarded 44 vessels and personal watercraft, terminated 11 vessels' voyages for having an insufficient number of life

jackets onboard or having inoperable or absent fire extinguishers. One recreational boater was the subject of an outstanding warrant, and the Coast Guard was able to turn the individual over to Alaska State Troopers.

No boaters were found to be operating vessels under the influence of alcohol.

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The Coast Guard Marine Safety and Security Team (MSST) Anchorage used one of its defender class small boats to assist the Alaska State Troopers in patrolling the waters over the Fourth of July Weekend. Photo courtesy U.S. Coast Guard

More Entries Sought for Life Jacket Design Competition

What would a life jacket look and feel like if the private sector could design it without government oversight?

Take a pencil to paper and show us what you think a life jacket should look like and you could end up with \$5,000 at the conclusion of the "Innovation in Life Jacket Design Competition."

Sponsored by the BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water and the Personal Flotation Device Manufacturers Association (PFDMA), the contest seeks entries that embrace new technologies and out-of-the-box thinking to solve the age-old problem of why certain boaters won't routinely wear life jackets. Entries are encouraged from academia, schools, industry, armchair designers, boaters or anyone interested in a design challenge.

A number of interesting new designs have been received since the contest was launched March 31, and it's expected that more will come as the school year progresses and the December 15 deadline approaches. A number of enquiries have also been received from around the globe including Japan, England, Scotland, Australia, Spain and Norway. The winner will be announced at the Miami International Boat Show in February 2006.

The competition will be judged based on four criteria: wearability, reliability, cost and innovation. "Wearability" relates to the level of comfort. "Reliability" will take into account the chances for potential failure, while "cost" will look at the affordability of the design. "Innovation" will take into account originality or the employment of new technologies.

There are no rules regarding types of materials to be used or whether the design meets any current U.S. Coast Guard or Underwriters Laboratory standards. However, certain entries may be submitted to the U.S. Coast Guard to review for possible financial assistance towards gaining full USCG approval.

Entries do not have to include a working model or prototype, as detailed drawings will be accepted. For more information including an entry form and contest rules, visit www.BoatUS.com/Foundation/lifejacketdesign. You may also contact Ruth Wood at 703.823.9550, x3204; email: RWood@BoatUS.com or Bernice McArdle at 312.946.6280; email: BMcArdle@NMMA.org.

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National Safe Boating Council Offers Annual Awards, Grants

Since 1958, the National Safe Boating Council has served as an advocate for boating safety and education, as well as a unifying means for organizations to seek safer boating through education.

As part of its mission to provide a forum for the advancement and support of safe and enjoyable recreational boating, the Council sponsors two annual awards and several small grants. These awards and grants recognize individual and organizational partners in the boating community that create innovative programs aimed at improving boating education.

Boating Education Advancement Award

Sponsored by Coors Brewing Company, the Boating Education Advancement (BEA) Award recognizes individuals and organizations that have developed and successfully implemented programs to:

- Enhance the image and recognition of boating safety efforts;
- Share success stories for the betterment of safe boating;
- Create a closer partnership between national, state and local boating educational organizations;
- Promote the themes of the National Safe Boating Week campaign; and
- Provide a platform for recognition of outstanding boating education programs and grassroots boating safety efforts.

Two levels of competition are associated with the BEA Awards: regional and national. Each of the three NASBLA Regions – Southern, Northern and Western – and Canada select a regional winner.

Each regional winner receives a \$1,000 prize, a trip to the annual International Boating and Water Safety Summit (IBWSS) and an opportunity to compete for the \$1,500 national award.

At IBWSS, the regional award recipients give a presentation on their winning programs, then the national winner is selected by an anonymous panel of judges. Eligible programs should be duplicable and adaptable by other interested boating educators.

Deadlines for submitting applications to the boating law administrator in each state differ by region: Southern Region – April 15; Western and Northern Regions – May 15.

Cleveland Metroparks Institute of the Great Outdoors received the 2005 National Boating Education Advancement Award for its program “Boating Education for People of All Abilities.”

The program enables participants of all abilities to develop and enhance their outdoor skills, knowledge and environmental ethics. Cleveland Metroparks Institute represented the Northern NASBLA Region in the competition.

The Southern regional recipient was the Sam Houston Area Council Sea Scout Fleet, and the Western recipient was Oregon State Marine Board's Jr. Boater Program.

Boating Safety Youth Program Award

West Marine sponsors the Boating Safety Youth Program Award. The award recognizes individuals and organizations that have developed and successfully implemented innovative youth boating education programs targeting safety issues and concerns of a national interest.

Editor's Note: For more information on the Boating Safety Youth Program Award, see the article on the bottom of page 8.

Recreational Boating Safety Grants

Now that the 2005 recreational boating season is almost over, it is time to think about future safe boating promotions. What better time to identify your boating safety needs? So, as this season closes, apply for a grant to help you make this season's idea next season's reality!

There are many boating organizations and groups eager to promote safe boating. These groups exert numerous resources to raise a relatively small amount of money. With the assistance of the Local Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Grant Program, these resources may be focused more effectively on safe boating initiatives.

Applications for the Local RBS Grants will be accepted between October 25, 2005 and January 25, 2006. Grants will be awarded by March 15, 2006,



enabling recipients to have the funds for their 2006 National Safe Boating Week projects.

Since its inception in 2001, this program has awarded 87 grants to organizations in 29 states. The amount of money to be awarded has increased for 2006, improving your chances of receiving funding.

To view the guidelines and obtain an application, visit the NSBC website at www.safeboatingcouncil.org.

Complete details about all NSBC awards, application forms, profiles of past winning entries, and RBS Grants is available at www.safeboatingcouncil.org or by contacting the NSBC Headquarters:

Phone: 703.361.4294
Fax 703.361.5294

Mailing address:
National Safe Boating Council Inc.,
P.O. Box 509
Bristow, VA 20136

NSBC welcomes the opportunity to encourage and recognize projects that have made lasting contributions to the interest of boating safety. Through the Boating Education Advancement Award, Boating Safety Youth Program Award and Recreational Boating Safety Grants, NSBC encourages partnerships with boating communities and assists local groups in funding projects that demonstrate our mutual excitement about boating safety and our commitment to safer boating through education.



BoatU.S. Operates More than 350 Kids Life Jacket Loaner Sites

The BoatU.S. Foundation Life Jacket Loaner Program has added 34 new sites to its nationwide program that provides a simple way for parents to borrow a properly sized children's life jacket at launch ramps, marinas and waterfront businesses.

Since its inception eight years ago, the program has saved the lives of at least three children. It is estimated that BoatU.S. life jackets are loaned out more than 50,000 times a year.

"We make it easy to keep kids safer while boating by bringing children's life jackets right to the waterfront where boaters need them and they are absolutely free," said Chris Edmonston, director of boating safety for the BoatU.S. Foundation.



"Sometimes it gets pretty hectic preparing for a weekend of boating, and boat owners may forget about extra life jackets needed for young boating guests. Also, kids grow so quick that they may not fit last year's life jacket. That's where we

step in by providing the right-sized life jacket at over 350 sites across the country. Once the family is done enjoying the water, they simply return the jacket," he continued.

The Foundation provides each new loaner site with a "kit" of 12 life jackets (a selection of infant, child, or youth jacket sizes), protective storage bin, sign-out sheets and program signage, allowing hundreds of children all summer long to safely enjoy an afternoon, day or weekend on a boat with their families and friends.

Businesses or organizations interested in participating in the Life Jacket Loaner Program can apply in the fall of 2005 by visiting www.BoatUS.com/Foundation/LJLP.

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Oregon Urges Personal Watercraft Operators to Use Caution

A recent series of personal watercraft (PWC) accidents is highlighting the need for caution. A number of serious injuries and one fatality have occurred, prompting the warning from the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) and marine patrol officers.

"We are greatly concerned about the number of PWC accidents in recent weeks. Operating too fast and too close to other boats have played a role in most of these accidents," says Paul Donheffner, director of the OSMB. "Operating and riding a PWC can be fun, but if you don't take basic precautions, it can quickly turn into a tragedy."

Donheffner says PWC operators can avoid accidents by following some basic rules:

- Do not operate in excess of 10 mph when approaching within 100 feet of another motorized or sail vessel underway.
- All persons must wear a US Coast Guard-approved type I, II or III life jacket.
- If you are 45 years of age or younger, you are required to have an Oregon boater education card to operate a PWC and any motorized watercraft.
- Know your limitations.

A total of 651 citations were given throughout the state in 2004 to PWC

operators. The majority of these citations were given for failure to carry a boater education card, followed by exceeding the speed limit and unsafe or reckless operation. Unsafe and reckless operations are defined as: operations that endanger or would likely endanger a person or property, such as operating a PWC too close to a canoe causing it to nearly capsize; and operating a boat carelessly in a willful disregard of others, such as a PWC pulling a skier through an area where swimmers are present in spite of the regulatory buoy markers.

Common injuries occur when a PWC collides either with another PWC, a boat or with fixed objects such as docks or tree stumps. Risk factors include inexperience, excessive speed and careless maneuvers by the operators. Operators unfamiliar with the watercraft seem to be at especially high risk. In most accidents involving a PWC the operator has fewer than 10 hours of operation experience. Operators who lend their PWC to family and friends must be sure the user understands how to operate the craft properly. Owners can be held responsible for how the people they lend their PWC to operate, according to the OSMB.

"Current models can reach speeds in excess of 65 mph. Imagine driving a car at these speeds and not having the ability to apply the brakes. As with any other

watercraft, stopping a PWC is achieved only by cutting the throttle and by coasting; while coasting, no steering is possible on many PWC models," says Bill Rydbloom, law enforcement manager for OSMB. "Marine officers are being asked to increase vigilance regarding enforcement of PWCs operating at high speeds and in close proximity to other boats."



Photo by Randy Henry, Oregon State Marine Board

People can safeguard themselves by taking a safety course designed for PWC operation or taking a boating safety course. These courses will increase the operator's understanding of the rules of the waterway as well as safety issues that PWC operators encounter.

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Ohio Employs Mobile Command Unit

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has placed into service a newly purchased mobile command unit that will assist in providing security protection on state and federal waterways in the state. Funding for the purchase of the 33,000-pound, 31-foot-long diesel unit and trailer came from a grant provided by the Transportation Security Agency.

Since Ohio plays a very active role in protecting state resources with regard to homeland security issues, the mobile command unit is a great asset. It features highly complex and integrated communications and surveillance systems that are ideal for monitoring potential intrusions into a marine security zone and for responding to special assignments and public safety emergencies. The communications radio system provides for

systematic linkage of communications with other agencies such as the U.S. Coast Guard, Ohio State Patrol and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency.

Additional items in the Mobile Command Unit are marine radar, wireless Ethernet, and surveillance, fax and camera equipment. The mobile unit pulls an equipment trailer that includes redundant communications systems and amenities for the temporary living needs of staff officers.

ODNR's expanded role in assuring that public safety needs are adequately met statewide would not be possible without federal funding support and the cooperation shared among various law enforcement and response agencies.



The Ohio Department of Natural Resources has a very active role in protection of state resources with regard to homeland security issues. The department recently purchased a mobile command unit to assist in these efforts. Photo courtesy Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Boat Traffic Up, Fatalities Down in Michigan

As of the end of August, Michigan boat traffic was up for the year while boating fatalities were down dramatically.

Statewide, there were 12 fatal boat accidents through the end of August, according to statistics from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. That's down significantly from all of 2004, when there were 25 fatal boat accidents and 27 people killed in those accidents. Law enforcement officials say boating activity – and resulting accidents and deaths – drop significantly after Labor Day.

Overall, there were 93 boating accidents involving 118 vessels in the state by the end of August, down from 168

accidents involving 217 vessels in 2004. There were 986,456 boats registered in the state as of the end of August, according to the Secretary of State.

Though officials would like to attribute the apparent decline to increased awareness of boating safety, they weren't sure that was the case.

"I can't imagine why the numbers are exactly opposite of what I would expect," said Lt. Creig Grey of the DNR's law enforcement division. "I would like to think it's due to increased awareness of boating safety. I just can't say for sure."



Washington Adopts Clean Marina Program

Seattle's Elliott Bay Marina was declared Washington State's first-ever Clean Marina on August 13.

The award honors the marina's 10-year history as an environmentally responsible marina. A Clean Marina designation indicates that a marina is in compliance with environmental regulations, has voluntarily adopted additional environmental practices and has passed an extensive certification inspection by a county hazardous waste investigator. In Washington, a Clean Marina certification indicates that the facility has also been certified as an EnviroStars business.

The EnviroStars program, an incentive-based pollution prevention certification program administered by county governments, rewards businesses that take voluntary steps to reduce pollution, with particular focus on hazardous waste management and reduction. Marinas are motivated for the award in order to become better stewards



of the waters, and by the prestige of being recognized as an environmentally responsible business.

Washington will follow 21 other states that have Clean Marina programs in place.

Along with Elliott Bay Marina, the Clean Marina partnership also recognizes Bell Harbor Marina, Harbor Island Marina, Shilshole Bay Marina, Stimson Marina, Port of Blaine Marina, Brownsville Marina, Breakwater Marina, Chinook Landing Marina, Dock Street Marina, Foss Landing Marina & Boat Storage, and Foss Waterway Marina, as EnviroStars-Certified Clean Marinas.



Point Cadet Marina Designated a Clean Marina

Point Cadet Marina in Biloxi, Miss., was designated a Clean Marina on Aug. 12. The marina is the third in the state to be designated a Clean Marina as part of the Mississippi Clean Marina Program.

The Clean Marina Program, a cooperative effort of Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and other partners, is a voluntary program that encourages marina operators to adopt best management practices for sewage

handling, fuel management, solid waste management, vessel cleaning and repair, storm water management, staff training and boater education to help reduce water pollution and erosion in state waterways. An evaluation team visits the marina to determine that the marina has met all necessary requirements to become certified as a Clean Marina. The Mississippi program is one of several in the nation.



From left, LaDon Swann, director of the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, Frankie Duggan, Biloxi Port Division manager and Mike Walker, Department of Marine Resources staff officer, hold up a Clean Marina flag at a designation ceremony at Point Cadet Marina.

Photo Courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

New York Increases Age Allowed to Operate Personal Watercraft

In July, New York Governor George E. Pataki signed into law legislation that will increase safety on the state's waterways by increasing the minimum age of those allowed to operate personal watercraft (PWC) to 14 years old. The new law will take effect January 1, 2006.

Current law requires any person between the ages 10 and 18 to possess a boating safety certificate to operate any mechanically powered vessel, including PWC, meaning that operators as young as 10 years old are allowed to operate these vessels.

"New York State has been blessed with a wide variety of spectacular waterways that are a popular destination for families and outdoor enthusiasts and we are committed to making sure that everyone who enjoys the water has a safe and pleasurable experience," Governor Pataki said. "Last year's boating season was the second safest on record, and the new law...is another step we are taking to make New York's waterways as safe as they possibly can be."

New York State has been a leader in PWC safety initiatives providing model legislation for many other states to emulate.

"New York's State Office of Parks and Recreation has long been in the forefront of boating safety with respect to children, beginning in the early 1960s with youthful operator education (10-18 year olds), mandatory life jacket wear in the mid '90s (those less than 12 years of age), and again today with a reasonable minimum age for personal watercraft operation (minimum 14 years of age)," said New York Boating Law Administrator Brian Kempf.

In 1998, Governor Pataki signed legislation requiring boating safety courses for operators of personal watercraft. Since the law went into effect, PWC accidents have dropped by a dramatic 63 percent. New York has the largest mandatory education program for the operation of these vessels in the country.

"The state of New York, with the support of organizations such as the Personal Watercraft Industry Association, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, the United States Power Squadrons and the National Transportation Safety Board, has partnered in taking this important step in improving the safety of recreational boating. We are grateful for the bill's sponsorship and support in the state legislature and the governor's endorsement and signature of the law," continued Kempf.

Maureen Healey, executive director of the Personal Watercraft Industry Association said, "We applaud the New York Legislature and the Governor for approving this proposal. By signing this legislation into law, Governor Pataki has taken a bold step to help ensure capable and mature boaters are at the helm on New York waterways."

The law will restrict personal watercraft operation to those persons 14 years of age or older. Operators will still be required to possess a boating safety certificate.

"Personal watercraft are a lot of fun to operate but they should be approached with the same respect and level of knowledge as other boats," said Healey. "The personal watercraft industry thanks Senator [Dean] Skelos and Assemblywoman [Patricia] Eddington for

putting boating safety first and introducing this proposal to require that PWC operators have reached a certain level of maturity."

According to the *New York State 2004 Recreational Boating Report*, in 2004 there was a dramatic reduction in fatalities, injuries and boating accidents from the previous year. Fatalities dropped 47 percent from 34 deaths to 18; injuries decreased from 132 to 93 and the number of accidents dropped by a third from 303 to 204. These figures represent the second-safest season since such statistics have been kept.

New York ranks seventh in the country for total number of registered boats with more than 520,000 motorized vessels and the state's fatality rate for registered boaters is below the national average. New York State's nationally recognized boating safety program helped educate a record-setting 40,000 New York boaters last year.

State Parks Commissioner Bernadette Castro said, "Governor Pataki's long-standing commitment to safety and our successful partnership with the boating community have resulted in a dramatic reduction in accidents on the water. With the miles of coastline and tremendous recreational opportunities available in New York, this new law will strengthen our ongoing efforts to reduce accidents among young personal watercraft operators and make our waterways safer for this enjoyable and popular activity."





Commodore Warren E. McAdams
National Directorate Commodore for Recreational Boating Safety, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Education – Stability and Change

Nowadays, change is a constant part of our lives. Whether it be boating, travel or everyday living, we are constantly exposed to new issues and requirements.

Within this framework, the NASBLA standards for boating public education courses could be a help or a hindrance in accommodating change; and, I think the standards have already established a record of accomplishment.

Thus far the standards have been a positive force in adapting to an ever-changing recreational boating safety climate. For example, the standards provided a vehicle for incorporating carbon monoxide hazards into course revisions on an expedited basis. The standards serve to establish basic requirements for education courses and the standards provide a mechanism to react to changes brought on by an evolving boating environment.

It was not too many years ago that education on personal watercraft (PWC) had to be added to existing courses or taught from a separate book. Now the basics of PWC are covered in the overall material of a course, and PWC are considered for what they are – a boat. This is not to say that specialty courses are not desirable or needed, but boaters will be exposed to the basics in a general boating safety course.

Paddlesports may be the next challenge in terms of where they fit into boating safety courses. On a local basis, I am seeing an occasional paddlesport enthusiast in boating safety courses. Fortunately, if the paddlesports person can relate, there is a lot of pertinent information in the usual boating safety course. Weight and balance, entering and

exiting the craft, safety equipment, rules of the road and other elements have applicability to the paddlecraft. For more specialized training, the paddlesports advocate must seek out additional classes.

That raises another point. With the trend from multi-week courses to the one-day eight-hour basic safety course, today's boating safety classes can only cover the basics. While this is often enough for many recreational boaters, we need to acquaint students with the many specialty courses that are available.



PG Bill McMahn, DCP, District 7, Division 5 at Flotilla 8, helps students master knot-tying during a Boating Skills and Seamanship class. Photo courtesy U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Other topics that require a special course to be covered in sufficient detail include the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), Rescue 21, the Global Positioning System (GPS), VHF radio, radar and many other topics. For someone who likes to teach boating classes, there is a great deal of opportunity! And, as technology advances continue, there will be more opportunities.

It never ceases to amaze me to see the number of inland boaters – in a city on a large river – that seek out coastal piloting and navigation classes. In today's mobile society, boaters travel to the Great Lakes or

coastal waters to use their own boats, cruise with friends or charter a boat. So, while we have to satisfy a huge demand for basic boating safety classes, we also must pay heed to the interests in advanced or specialty topics.

Homeland security is another basic that deserves coverage in our courses. It only takes a few minutes to explain what role recreational boaters can play in addressing homeland security issues. From a safety standpoint we already cover naval vessel security zones and the expanding use of other security zones. Incorporating the subject of America's Waterway Watch seems to be a good fit.

Another education vehicle, which is the purview of two volunteer organizations and a handful of states, is the Vessel Safety Check (VSC) program. While a VSC is aimed at an inspection for required federal and state safety equipment, the activity provides a forum for a variety of topics. The boater can be acquainted with any security zones in

the area, hear recommendations for additional items of safety equipment, receive information on America's Waterway Watch, and be told about local boating safety classes.

While there are many providers of boating safety courses, the overall availability and quality of boating education opportunities is at a good level. Under the stewardship of the Coast Guard and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, recreational boating safety education continues to grow and get better!





Jeff Hoedt
Chief, Office of Boating Safety



Boating education – An effective strategy

With commendations to all the boating safety partners in our nation, we have witnessed the incredible success of reducing boating fatalities during an era of greatly increasing boating activity. We've achieved record-low numbers of fatalities; and yet, we know that we can do more to make boating safer and more enjoyable.

The challenge now becomes identifying the strategies that will be successful and implementing them effectively.

Boating safety education has been a key strategy used to combat boating accidents. However, the National Boating Safety Advisory Council has emphasized the need to know whether education, particularly mandatory education, works.

To meet the Council's challenge, we're studying locations that have established "quick phase-in" implementation of mandatory education requirements for all ages of motorboat operators. Particularly focusing on Alabama, Canada,

Connecticut and Oregon, the numbers are more than promising. Following implementation of their requirement, each has experienced, or is experiencing, a reduction in fatalities that greatly exceeds the national trends.

We'll continue to study this further. In the meantime, keep up the good work. Offer the courses, teach the classes and prepare the boating community for an even more fulfilling and safer boating experience.

Boating Education Evolves – Is It Meeting Its Objective?

By Wayne Stacey, Office of Boating Safety, U.S. Coast Guard

Over the years, the popularity of boating has increased dramatically. With this increased participation comes the potential for greater risk of accidents. However, in 2004, there was a record-low 676 recreational boating fatalities reported. Was this just a fluke, or are safety strategies, such as boating safety education, starting to pay dividends?

Forty-four states now require at least some operators to complete mandatory boating safety education or pass an equivalency examination prior to operating select power-driven vessels. With boating fatalities apparently on a constant downward trend, you might ask, "Is all the emphasis placed on boating education worth it?" And, "Is the recreational boating community taking full advantage of the many opportunities available to get the necessary boating safety education?"

Much controversy surrounds the idea of having mandatory boating education implemented throughout the United States. There are an equal number of arguments, pro and con, about requiring mandatory education for everyone who operates any type of watercraft, regardless of age. However, most agree that we should have some type of mandatory boating safety education.

Numerous individuals throughout the boating community have commented that the basic eight-hour course offered by many entities is not sufficient and should be extended to cover more in-depth subject matter. Some feel that more emphasis should be placed on teaching the Rules of the Road,

Navigational Piloting and Chart Work, etc. These are all valid points.

However, through a grant provided by the Coast Guard, a comprehensive review of the Education Standards was conducted to assure that the highest risk areas of boating were appropriately addressed. The end result was a set of defined educational objectives and curriculum standards that all major course providers and NASBLA have adopted into their curriculum revisions.

Most of the state courses are designed for people with little or no knowledge in boating safety and seamanship. These are entry level courses designed for both youth and adults. For more in-depth specialty courses, organizations such as the United States Power Squadrons, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Sailing Association, plus a host of private providers, offer excellent advanced training opportunities, including courses in advanced coastal piloting, boat handling, and electronic navigation. Some commercial course providers offer hands-on training after teaching the theory in a classroom setting. These courses are a logical next step in the education process for new boaters.

We receive numerous calls about where boating courses are being offered. With a couple of keystrokes on the computer, we can direct callers to an appropriate website or provide them timely information on courses being offered.

Many callers inquire about Internet courses. More than 32 states have approved

online boating safety courses. These are self-paced and can be completed in the comfort of a home. In these situations, some states allow the final examination to be taken online, while others require the students to go to a designated location for a proctored exam. In either situation, upon successful completion of the exam, the required certificate is issued either by the state or the course provider.

In addition to state online courses, the Coast Guard Auxiliary and United States Power Squadrons offer a computer-based boating safety course, "America's Boating Course." This is another excellent example of providing quality education that can meet a busy family's time constraints.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the thousands of state volunteer instructors, public education instructors from the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Power Squadrons, and the volunteers from the many other boating organizations who share their time and expertise to promote boating safety through education. Without this group of dedicated volunteers, the program would not be as successful as it is today.

I am hopeful that the number of fatalities will continue to decline, and I know that boating education will continue to have a positive impact on reducing the number of deaths on America's waterways. Oh, remember, "Never boat under the influence, always wear your PFD, take a boating safety course, and get a Vessel Safety Check – You're in Command. Boat Responsibly."



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2005-2007 RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2005

8 - 12

States Organization for Boating Access
Annual Conference, Exhibition and
Members Meeting
Springfield, Illinois
401.247.2224

15

National Boating Federation
Fall Meeting
Michigan City, Indiana
219.763.3777 or tomdogan@doganlaw.com

18 - 23

Canadian Sail & Power Squadrons
Annual Conference
Winnipeg, Manitoba
416.293.2438

19 - 23

US Sailing
Annual General Meeting
Phoenix, Arizona
401.683.0800

NOVEMBER 2005

8 - 10

Marine Retailers Association of America
Annual Convention
Las Vegas, Nevada
708.763.9210

12 - 13

American Canoe Association
Annual Meeting
Fairfax, Virginia
703.451.0141

JANUARY 2006

4 - 7

National Sheriffs' Association
Mid-Winter Conference
Palm Springs, California
703.836.7827

4 - 8

United States Power Squadrons
Annual Meeting
Orlando, Florida
888.367.8777

23 - 24

American Boat & Yacht Council
Conference on Marine Industry Technical Training
Tampa, Florida
410.956.1050

29 - February 1

Association of Marina Industries and
American Boat Builders & Repairers Association
International Marina & Boatyard Conference
Orlando, Florida
866.367.6622

FEBRUARY 2006

25 - March 1

International Association of Marine Investigators
Annual Meeting
Virginia Beach, Virginia
866.844.4264

APRIL 2006

30 - May 3

International Boating and Water Safety Summit
Palm Harbor, Florida
703.361.4294
501.844.2197

MAY 2006

14 - 17

Western States Boating Administrators Association
Annual Conference
Kauai, Hawaii
208.334.4180 x 224

16

National Safe Boating Week
Congressional Reception
Washington, D.C.
703.361.4294

20 - 26

North American Safe Boating Campaign
703.361.4294
www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com
campaign@safeboatingcouncil.org

JUNE 2006

17 - 21

National Sheriffs' Association
Annual Conference
Orlando, Florida
703.836.7827

AUGUST 2006

15 - 20

United States Power Squadrons
Governing Board Meeting
New York, New York
888.367.8777

SEPTEMBER 2006

21 - 27

NASBLA
Annual Conference
Louisville, Kentucky
859.225.9487 or info@nasbla.org

FEBRUARY 2007

20 - 25

United States Power Squadrons
Annual Meeting
Jacksonville, Florida
888.367.8777

SEPTEMBER 2007

4 - 9

United States Power Squadrons
Governing Board Meeting
Norfolk, Virginia
703.361.4294

4 - 11

NASBLA
Annual Conference
Burlington, Vermont
859.225.9487

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

International Boating and Water Safety Summit

April 30-May, 3, 2006
Palm Harbor, Florida