

WSIA puts
"best"
in best
practices

**Wake
surfing
on the
rise**

**Lowest
number of
fatalities
on record**



SCA

small craft advisory

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

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About the Cover

Wake surfing began in the mid-1950s when enterprising surfers used the family boat to keep the excitement of surfing rolling when the waves were too small.

WSIA photo

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Departments

2 from the HELM

4 nasbla NEWS

8 new BLAs

18 partner PERSPECTIVES

22 boating BRIEFS

28 coast guard COMMENTS



10



14



features

10 WSIA forges ahead in improving
parasailing safety

Association improves safety for popular
towed sport

14 Got surf?

How surfers enjoy their sport inland

20 It's up, it's down – what is
really happening?

Expert analysis of the 2012 recreational
boating statistics

27 BOAT Program delivers Tactical
Operator Courses in California

Port Security Grant provides essential
training for numerous officers





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from the Helm



Toby Velasquez
NASBLA
President



John Johnson, CAE
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Executive Director

Water sports provide varied, valued experiences

As I sit here in my patrol unit, I realize it's been over a year since I have been forced inside by a cold, high-elevation rainstorm, one that northern New Mexico has been badly thirsting for. As the thunder rolls in, the variety of bustling lake activities I was watching under careful eye disappear. But, like the rain, those diverse activities mean so much more. At this high mountain lake, outdoor watersport enthusiasts from Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado and New Mexico were enjoying the benefits of cool mountain temperatures as they fished from an accessible pier, cruised on their motorboats, paddled for fitness, and enjoyed a leisurely tow atop a vibrantly colored inflatable tube.

It was just another simple and genuine scene of neighbors enjoying time well spent alone or with friends and family on the water. These strangers probably didn't care about the others' intentions or enjoyment but, due to their choice of activities, they are absolutely linked. We know that the young, old, rich, and poor continually seek safe, affordable, and exciting opportunities to invest their well-deserved time off and hard-earned money. With information and purchase power available at our fingertips, more people of varying means, ethnicities and cultures are enabled to get out and enjoy our waterways in very different ways. For many, these activities are quality of life components that cannot be taken lightly and are seldom compromised.

This issue of *Small Craft Advisory* highlights water sports. Undoubtedly, the term "water sports" will mean something different to each of you. Do you define it as fishing, motor boating, kayaking, parasailing, or wakeboarding? For most of you reading this, the answer quite simply is, YES. Regardless of your personal interests, water sports can be interpreted differently due to

the varying challenges and expectations. However, for participants, these unique opportunities are essential and their personal or communal experience and memories drive their desire to grow and maintain a certain lifestyle.

To this end, NASBLA must continue to focus on further reducing boating-related fatalities and making the nation's waterways even safer, more secure and more enjoyable for all who choose a traditional or trending watersport activity. However, while continuing to fulfill our mission, we must identify and implement a balanced approach that does not diminish the intrinsic value of these certain activities.

Just a few months ago, I attended this year's International Boating & Water Safety Summit (IBWSS). During IBWSS, the Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA) – one of our valued associates – was deservedly recognized for outstanding work in support of watersports safety. While there, the WSIA shared the news of their success delivering 56 million impressions in 2012 for boating safety messages, supported by a nonprofit boating safety outreach grant from the U.S. Coast Guard. In addition, the WSIA presented their Wear Your Life Jacket Video public service announcement (PSA), and professional wakeboarder and star of the video, Chad Sharpe, was available for discussion. The PSA emphasizes the importance of wearing your life jacket while participating in any towed water sport.

A few years ago, Sharpe suffered a hard crash while not wearing a life jacket and found himself motionless under water, unable to move his arms. Fortunately, the boat got back to him in time, but it was definitely a close call. With Sharpe's veteran pro status, the PSA outlines the importance

of wearing a life jacket no matter how skilled you are on the water.

The WSIA has and continues to be committed to working with local, state, and federal agencies in partnership with national and international governing bodies to ensure the use of waterways for towed water sports. As a group, they develop best practices and sustainable growth for all towed water sports and are dedicated to being the world's leading industry advocate that communicates, produces and distributes safety and educational materials for towed water sports.

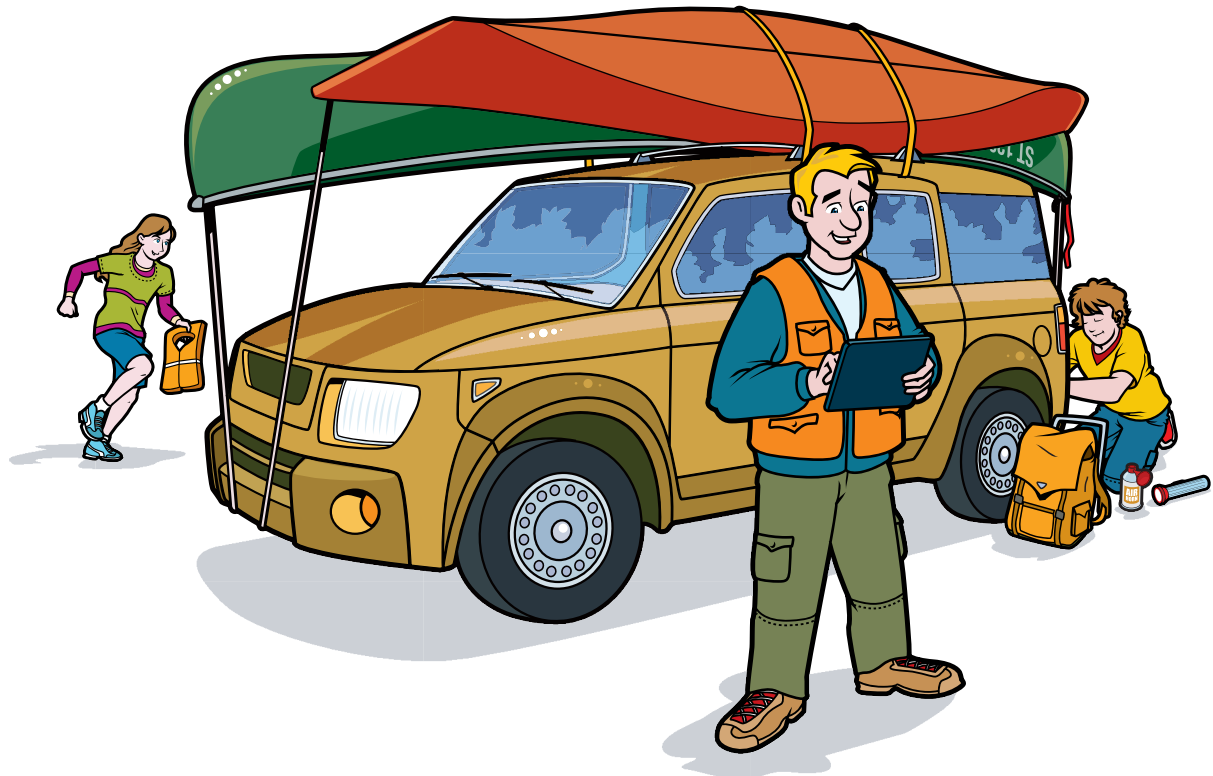
So, why am I thinking about this during a rainstorm in the mountains of northern New Mexico? It further emphasizes that sustaining multiple diverse watersports opportunities is not only essential to those that participate, but it is also critical for those of us that manage outdoor recreation.

Recently, the Outdoor Industry Association released the results from a study that takes a conservative approach in tracking direct annual spending by Americans in pursuit of outdoor recreation across 10 activity categories (bicycling, camping, fishing, hunting, motorcycling, off-roading, snowsports, trailsports, watersports and wildlife viewing). The study provides that the Outdoor Industry generates \$646 billion in consumer spending annually, directly employs 6.1 million Americans, and generates \$39.9 billion in federal tax revenue and \$39.7 billion in state/local tax revenue.

For comparison, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Americans spend more on outdoor recreation (\$646 billion) than pharmaceuticals (\$331 billion) or cars (\$340 billion). In addition, the study showed that

(Continued on page 6)

Safe paddling starts here.



Paddle sports safety starts with education. Thanks to the free, mobile-friendly online paddle course from BOATERexam.com, learning can happen anywhere, anytime. Get the whole family prepared for summer paddling!



Who's got the Boatsey?

The nominees are in and the only thing left is to find out the winner. See you in Boise for the announcement of the 2013 NASBLA Boating Safety Educator of the Year!

NASBLA News

NASBLA adds new courses to BOAT offerings

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators continues to add to its lineup of training for marine law enforcement officers and emergency search and rescue personnel. The two latest course offerings through the Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) program provide training in GPS Forensics and Small Vessel Maritime Radiological and Nuclear Detection Operations.



• GPS Forensics class to debut at NASBLA Annual Conference

Developed by Officer Paul Alber with the Palm Beach Police Department, in cooperation with NASBLA's BOAT

program, the GPS Forensics course will provide law enforcement officers with a foundation for recovering evidence from GPS devices and preparing it for courtroom presentation.

The inaugural course offering will be held Sept. 14, in conjunction with NASBLA's Annual Conference in Boise, Idaho. During this eight-hour course, students will learn about the wide variety of devices that are on the market and the types of data the devices hold as well as the best practices for securing a GPS for examination and the legal guidelines that must be followed. Finally, students will learn about the tools and software needed to conduct a basic examination of a GPS, and learn how to present the results.

Register today as space is limited. Additional information about this new course offering is available online at www.nasbla.org.

• Small Vessel Maritime Radiological & Nuclear Detection Operations course available



The Small Vessel Maritime Radiological and Nuclear Detection Operations course was developed in coordination with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, in support of the Global Nuclear Detection Architecture.

The SV-RND course is designed to elevate and enhance the radiological

and nuclear detection capabilities of officers, agencies and regions to conduct enhanced search operations on the waters of the United States, through a review of RND fundamentals and equipment and development of operational procedures and response methods. This course consists of instructor lecture, which will be aided by slide presentations, class interaction, practical exercises and a knowledge test and final exam. The course is exportable and delivered to the location of the host agency and the venue of their choice.

For more information, contact Mark R. DuPont, National BOAT Program Director, at 859.225.9487.

NASBLA launches new Train-the-Trainer course



Graduates and instructors of the new Officer Water Survival — Train-the-Trainer course take a break to smile at the camera. Ohio DNR photo

Earlier this summer, NASBLA's Boat Operations and Training Program and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft delivered the first of three tuition-free offerings of our newest training course for maritime law enforcement: Officer Water Survival — Train-the-Trainer.

Fourteen agencies from 11 different states participated in the weeklong train-the-trainer course hosted by the Columbus Police Department's Training Facility. ODNr's cadre of instructors, led by Deputy Chief Karen Muench with the agency's Division of Watercraft, directed the officers through a grueling week of water survival techniques and teaching skills.

Graduates of this course will be afforded the opportunity to enter into a pledge agreement with NASBLA to utilize the course curriculum to train their own agency personnel. The pledge agreement with NASBLA will assure that the trainers will use only the most up-to-date version of the curriculum and not amend, add or delete from the course material.

More information is available at www.nasbla.org/OWS.

Partnership yields multi-agency training

NASBLA Boat Operations and Training instructors were in the Greater Louisville, Ky., area in June and early July to conduct a series of courses for local maritime law enforcement agencies. The grant-funded training is part of an ongoing initiative designed to bring multi-agency partnerships to area waters to bolster maritime safety and security.



BOAT instructors were asked to coordinate a drill that involved the underway boarding of the Belle of Louisville.

NASBLA's instructors met a unique challenge when they arrived for the training in mid-June. Area emergency response and law enforcement agencies were planning a multi-agency exercise that involved the underway boarding of the Belle of Louisville, a riverboat that plies the waters of the Ohio River. The exercise was designed to facilitate the delivery of law enforcement and fire department first responders to the vessel to handle a variety of emergencies.

Based on BOAT Program Instructor expertise, NASBLA was asked to coordinate the drill just a few days before it was scheduled. The team stepped to the plate with a detailed Operational Plan, pre-event safety briefing for all participants, and underway command and control. Those efforts, combined with underway monitoring of safety, resulted in a flawless exercise that benefited emergency responders from throughout the area. The event illustrated the depth of expertise within the NASBLA BOAT Instructor cadre and their ability to adapt to varied situations as they bring standardized training to maritime first responders across the country.

(Continued on page 6)

Minton named Planner of the Year



NASBLA Event Planner Joan Minton (right) was named Planner of the Year by the Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter of Meeting Professionals International.

NASBLA Event Planner Joan Minton was named Planner of the Year by the Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter of Meeting Professionals International. As one of the organization's two highest awards, the Planner of the Year Award goes to a planner member in recognition of outstanding association/industry contributions, leadership and professionalism. This person in their professionalism and dedication furthers the aims of MPI and its members. The selection of the award is based on a history of accomplishments in the industry as well as to meeting management for furthering the aims of MPI and its mission. Minton received the award on June 13, during the organization's annual awards banquet in recognition of her ongoing contributions of her time, hard work and experience to the meeting industry of Kentucky. Congratulations, Joan!

Sen. Frank Lautenberg was friend to recreational boating safety

NASBLA mourns the loss of a longtime friend to recreational boating safety. U.S. Senator Frank R. Lautenberg, who died on June 3, 2013, was a long-time leader on environmental protection, transportation and protecting public health. While he was serving as chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee and the Superfund Ocean and Water Protection Subcommittee, NASBLA honored him with its Legislative Award in 1990. The award



recognized Sen. Lautenberg's efforts to retain \$65 million earmarked in the State Boating Safety Program of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (which is now known as the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund). *

From the Helm (continued from page 2)

outdoor recreation provides 6.1 million jobs, as compared to 2.1 million jobs in oil and gas; 5.5 million jobs in construction; or 5.8 million jobs in finance and insurance. The study further revealed that the outdoor recreation economy grew from 2005-2011; it did so, during the worst economic recession in nearly a century.

Under the shade of the storm, as the rain washes over and nourishes the pale southern Rocky Mountain landscape, I am reminded of the overarching role NASBLA has in understanding, facilitating and sustaining multiple diverse outdoor watersport recreation opportunities where enjoyment, safety, and personal responsibility are valued in equal proportions. NASBLA, its members, and its partners—as a community—are now better positioned and better equipped to analyze emerging trends, anticipate likely outcomes, and plan contingencies to address this charge.

As exhibited by the WSIA, our communities' ability to think and act strategically will characterize and define our success in the next few decades and beyond as we continue to endeavor towards fostering and sustaining multiple safe outdoor watersport opportunities across the country. Ultimately, we assume this charge as a community of states, territories, associations, manufacturers and other key stakeholders collectively serving a variety of demographic segments who's quality of life are based all or in part on their ability to participate in unique outdoor watersport activities.

Within the hour, the storm passed and folks were out once again, enjoying their time alone or with friends and family on the water. Hopefully, my efforts that afternoon and our collective efforts moving forward will attract and support new and experienced outdoor watersport enthusiasts to seek and experience all their waterways can provide. At the end of the storm, we all succeeded if they do. *

NASBLA's



NASBLA's Boating Under the Influence (BUI) PROGRAM

WE NEED HOSTS!

For the FY 2014 RBS Grant cycle, NASBLA has a variety of BUI course offerings available to help meet your training needs. The grant-funded courses are tuition-free, and it's both easy and highly effective to sponsor a course in your area. The BUI course options:



- **BUI 01** 8-hour Seated Battery Transition Training Course
- **BUI 02** 8-hour BUI Trainer Transition Course
- **BUI 03** 24-hour BUI Detection and Enforcement Course
- **BUI 04** 24-hour BUI Train-the-Trainer Course

Specific details on each of the BUI course offerings can be found at <http://nasbla.org/BUI>.

If you are willing to step forward and host a class, contact NASBLA's BOAT Program today to receive a "pledge application", which outlines the host responsibilities for these tuition-free courses.

Classes are limited, so don't delay!

For more information, visit www.nasbla.org/boat.

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BLAS ^{NEW}

LIEUTENANT KENTON TURNER

Indiana



Hailing from Trafalgar, Indiana, Lt. Kenton Turner is an avid hunter and fisherman who has loved and promoted water sports throughout his career. While he doesn't currently own a boat, as an Indiana Conservation Officer, his on-duty watercraft use is certainly plentiful.

Turner is a graduate of Vincennes University. He began his career as a field officer in 1992 after graduating from the 24th ICO Recruit Training School and then the 112th Basic session of the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. He was first assigned to Marion County in operational District 6, and he transferred within district to Johnson County in 1996. He was promoted to training sergeant in 2006.

While assigned to the Training Section, he was heavily involved in recruit hiring and training as well as the continuing education requirements for the rest of the agency's officers. He assumed his new position as Indiana's boating law administrator on May 26, 2013, following the retirement of Felix Hensley.

In addition to being a new member of NASBLA, Lt. Turner is involved with the Indiana Conservation Officers Organization, Fraternal Order of Police, and North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association.

From Lake Michigan to the Ohio River as well as many manmade flood control reservoirs and several thousand natural lakes, Indiana offers numerous recreational boating opportunities. Lt. Turner plans to continue to build and develop a program that engages people in a way that provides them with lifelong safety changes to their boating habits and fun ways to teach their young passengers those traditions of boating safety.

More specifically, when talking about recreational boating safety, Lt. Turner cites life jacket wear and alcohol use as key topics to cover with boaters. "We must convince our boating public that it is vital not only to possess a life jacket but to wear it. In addition, educating the boating public of the dangers of intoxication while on the water is a primary need and responsibility," he said. "Instituting a program that reaches and influences people to seek boating activities as a viable recreational pursuit and also enlighten them on the safety regulations is one of my goals to fulfill with this position," Lt. Turner added.

CAPTAIN RACHEL M. ZECHENELLY

Louisiana



An avid boater, Capt. Rachel Zechenelly has access to all types of watercraft and tries to get on the water whenever possible. She plans to buy a new kayak soon and participates in several forms of recreational boating. "I enjoy canoeing, kayaking, and paddle boarding. I also love to fish and like to hit the marshes of south Louisiana for saltwater fishing as much as I can," she said.

Zechenelly has been an agent with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries since 1999. She started in New Orleans and worked a great deal of fisheries and boating safety enforcement on the coast including working in the Gulf of Mexico. She was assigned to headquarters in Baton Rouge in July 2005 to take over duties as the boating education coordinator. She also instructed enforcement cadets and other law enforcement agencies in vessel handling and operation, search and rescue, and boating safety education at the LDWF Law Enforcement Training Academy.

In May 2011, she was officially promoted to the position of captain in Boating Safety Enforcement and Waterway Management and was given the responsibility of overseeing the Enforcement Division's marine theft investigations, boating crash incident investigations, and the statewide boating safety education program. She was named the state's boating law administrator on June 6, 2013.

Rachel is actively involved in her homeowners association; we offer a lot of

community activities such as movie nights for kids, wine walks, craft shows, community garage sales, etc. "I also enjoy cycling and spend a great deal of time with a group that likes to bicycle around south Louisiana on the weekends. I try to spend as much time outdoors as I possibly can," she added.

As a new BLA, Capt. Zechenelly sees stable and creative funding of recreational boating programs as one of the biggest needs. "In the current climate of wanting to shrink government, states need to be clever and creative in finding ways to maintain status quo funding even while still receiving RBS dollars. I think this will be an issue well into the future," she said.

In Louisiana, she would like to expand her agency's outreach to paddle sports participants. "This is a growing boating population in Louisiana, especially in south Louisiana. We have seen an increase in participants in kayak fishing, and I would like to offer more programs for that group of boaters," Capt. Zechenelly added. *

WSIA



forges ahead in improving parasailing safety

By Larry Meddock
Executive Director
Water Sports Industry Association

Many years ago, some very enterprising folks discovered that they could attach a parachute to a motorized vessel and easily send someone aloft for the ride of their lives. It was a great theory and it worked, well . . . sort of. It was soon discovered that standard parachutes did not work well when being towed behind a boat, and soon customized chutes were being developed for the unique pull that parasailing required.

For years people would launch off the beach of a resort or a similar locale and, that, too sounded acceptable. More times than not, however, the prevailing wind would be on-shore and aiding in the chute's takeoff similar to the way aircraft ascend. There was only one problem with this approach. If, by terrible misfortune, the towline separated during takeoff, or soon after, the on-shore wind that helped launch the chute would then be the force driving the parasailor back toward the beach and potentially into buildings, light poles and other dangerous structures.

To the Rescue

The parasailing industry created special boats designed to launch and recover a parasailor from a launch pad (large deck area) on the aft of a larger boat. This innovation helped to make parasailing much safer and easier for launching and recovering. If done right, the parasailor does not even get their feet wet!

This all sounds well and good. So why is parasailing in the not-so-good spotlight of legislative action, lawsuits and a call for change? The answer is really very simple: Too many people have been hurt or killed in the last three years and action groups are calling for change.

WSIA is Asked to Help

Many years ago, a few enthusiastic parasail equipment manufacturers approached the Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA) asking for help to provide organized leadership for the parasail industry as a whole. After careful consideration that concluded parasailing is, in fact, a towed watersport, the WSIA, through a unanimous vote of its Board of Directors, agreed to help. The Water Sports Industry Association's goal is to eventually reduce injuries and fatalities to zero.

WSIA's first parasail meeting was held at the Miami Boat show in 2009. Since then, the WSIA has taken the lead in the parasail industry and much has been accomplished. Prior to this, an organization called the Professional Association of Parasail Operators (PAPO) led the parasailing industry. PAPO did a great job and they are to be commended on their leadership in the industry's formative years.

Initiating/Developing National Safety Standards

In 2010, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) contacted the WSIA looking for support of an effort to create national safety standards for parasailing using the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM International) as the facilitator. WSIA agreed to help on the condition that all parasailing stakeholders would be invited to participate in the process. For whatever reason, PAPO chose not to participate. That left the WSIA, the USCG, some dedicated industry manufacturers and a few others to take on this colossal task.

In the meantime, the WSIA began organizing the Parasail Operators Symposium in conjunction with the Surf Expo trade show in Orlando, Florida. What's ideal is that this show already featured most of parasailing's equipment manufacturers, making it the perfect venue for the symposium. The WSIA extended invitations to all parasail owners and operators to attend the conference, at no charge, to hear the latest information from the USCG and other agencies such as the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Just over 100 people attended the first symposium. As the show's popularity increased, the WSIA saw the symposium's attendance grow to about 185 in 2012 and 2013. At each symposium, representatives from the USCG and FWC gave presentations to the operators in attendance. One consistent message was delivered: "While it's clear that regulations are needed, do not let the feds or any other agency regulate you. Regulate yourself or the USCG will." While some resisted at first, the consistent message advising for self-regulation was heard over all else and over time the industry, as a whole, has accepted this as fact.

Progress Shows in Changing Attitudes

In 2013, the mood of the owners and operators in attendance changed from, "Why is the WSIA messing with our business?" to, "Why can't the WSIA move this process faster!" The implied endorsement was just what the WSIA and the USCG needed to assure that the project was on the right track. In April,

(Continued on page 12)

ASTM International and the WSIA, with the help of the entire parasail industry, approved the first national industry safety standard on weather. WSIA is working on three more new safety standards that it hopes to have adopted by April 2014.

The state of Florida has more parasail operators than any other state in the country. With Florida's year-round warm climate, they can fly anytime making the Sunshine State a great place to operate.

Unfortunately, Florida, undoubtedly due to its popularity, has been the site of some of parasailing's highest profile accidents. For nearly seven years, the Florida legislature has attempted to pass legislation that would regulate the parasail industry. To date, none has passed. FWC would be the agency the state would turn to if these laws were passed. It is for this reason the WSIA and the FWC have worked so closely together to help craft parasail language that would accomplish what the state wanted. Unfortunately, all of these attempts have failed to pass.

The WSIA hasn't given up. In 2012, the WSIA worked with Senator Maia Sachs and State Representative Gwendolyn Clarke Reed to craft new language for parasail regulations. In early 2013 we were disappointed to hear that, once again, the legislative measures failed. That said, work pressed on toward developing voluntary consensus standards through the ASTM process, with the premise being that the parasail industry would be far better off being proactive in pursuing industry-developed standards rather than



Parasailing is a popular recreational activity where a person is towed behind a boat while attached to a specially designed canopy wing that's much like a parachute.
WSIA photos



waiting for the government to implement standards and rules that may not have the same industry involvement.

A New Symposium Venue

During January's Parasail Operators Symposium several of the exhibitors came to the WSIA asking if we would consider changing the location for the Parasail Operators Symposium. The exhibitors wanted a venue for the conference that would allow for on-site product demonstrations, something that Surf Expo could not provide. A site was found and the WSIA's Symposium was released from its agreement with Surf Expo – a huge benefit from a great partner. The stage was now set for a new show complete with demos.

November 7-8, 2013, will mark the date for an all-new Parasail Operators Symposium

at the Magnuson Hotel and Marina Cove in St. Petersburg Beach, Florida. A 32-slip, deep-water marina will play host to a unique show. It is WSIA's goal not only to continue hosting presentations from the USCG, FAA and FWC, but also to allow all operators the chance to be heard during the ASTM process for standards development. It's critical to the process that all stakeholders know they are invited and encouraged to participate in the discussion and the standards development process. The agenda will allow time for presentations from the USCG and FWC, boat and parasail demos, breakout safety presentations as well as networking and social time.

Invitations will soon go out to all stakeholders, legislative representatives and industry leaders.

This two-day symposium

will be "the place to be" if you are in the parasail industry. WSIA's long-term goal for the Parasail Operators Symposium is for it to become the training venue for safe parasail operations. These symposiums promote partnering with federal and state law enforcement agencies and the industry and vessel owners/operators in safe parasail operations.

It has been a very busy four years since WSIA accepted the Coast Guard's offer to help. There have been difficulties, but the bright light at the end of this tunnel proves the process is working. There are some very responsible owner/operators that have a passion for what they do and they clearly want to do it as safely as they can. With the help of the USCG, FWC and ASTM, we're well on our way to providing parasailing with the very best in "best practices." ✨

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GOT SURF?

*By Jim Emmons
President
Water Sports Industry Association*

Wake surfing, the act of riding a surfboard without a towrope behind a boat, is one of today's most popular water sports.

Thousands of boaters have discovered wake surfing, with its lower impact and less physical requirement, as their preferred watersports activity. Riding a perpetual wave behind a boat is a lot of fun and it's incredibly social too, because the more people added to the boat the bigger and more fun the wave gets.

Hold on! You might be wondering how this seemingly dangerous activity can be legal on public waterways. The fact is, when done properly, wake surfing is actually very safe, and it's legal too.

Since wake surfing is performed relatively close to the aft of the vessel, one's first alarm might be concern for carbon monoxide poisoning. This is a logical supposition. Informal carbon monoxide tests were conducted. Anecdotal evidence shows that in certain conditions the average human ingests more carbon monoxide using a riding lawn mower than while wake surfing. That's right, mowing the grass could be more harmful! Carbon monoxide is not an issue until the participant is only a few feet from the exhaust port and approximately 12 inches

above the surface of the water. Normal wake surfing positions have proven to be out of the carbon monoxide danger zone.

Of course, one's second alarm might come from concern for a propeller strike, and with many boat types this is a legitimate cause for concern. Wake surfing, if performed behind an inboard or v-drive powered boat is very safe because boats of these power types have their propeller tucked far forward of the swim platform and even the transom, making it virtually impossible to hit from the wake surfing position. Additionally, as the boat moves forward at 12-17 mph, when the rider falls, the physics of momentum carry the boat "away" from the rider.

Capt. Richard Moore of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission said, "After trying it for myself, I understand the physics of it better. If done behind the proper type of boat the proximity to the boat is really a minimal concern. If a surfer begins to fall, they actually gain distance from the boat rather than come closer to it."

To adequately produce a wake large enough to surf, the boat must be weighted

with ballast on either its port or starboard side. The weight forces the hull deeper into the water resulting in a larger wake near the boat's stern. It's not uncommon to see wake surfing boats listing to one side as they move slowly down the waterway. When performed normally and with care, this is not an unsafe condition. In larger bodies of water the captain might put the boat on a course of a large arc (slight turn to one side or the other). When the boat turns it creates a smoother and cleaner wake on the inside of the turn.

Captain James Cook first discovered ocean wave riding in the 1700s when he witnessed Polynesians surfing waves with primitive canoes. By the early 1900s people were surfing in America. It gained enormous popularity in the 1960s when dozens of movies were released featuring the cool California activity. The surfing

lifestyle with its free spirit and relaxed attitude has allured people from all over the globe – even those that are thousands of miles from an ocean. Sales of surf related clothing in places thousands of miles from the ocean are testament to this fact.

Wake surfing began in the mid 1950s by enterprising young ocean surfers who used the family boat to keep the excitement of surfing when the waves were small. A documentary video called the *History of Wake Surfing*, by cinematographer Duncan Lee, exposes black and white newsreel tapes depicting surfers riding long boards behind a small 40hp outboard runabout. The highly recommended and entertaining 35-minute video also does a great job chronicling the events that have led wake surfing to what it is today.

Since most Americans don't live near the beach, being a "surfer" is nearly impossible. That is, until the guys at Centurion decided to take ocean surfing to the lakes. Rick Lee, founder of Centurion Boats, grew up in southern California. In 1996, sparked by accounts of people riding surfboards behind his boats, he got an idea to create a true surfable wave produced by a boat. His first wake surfing boat was called "The Wave."

The Wave looked like nothing ever seen before. The short, mid engine boat included a platform molded directly into the transom. Creating a wake that was large enough for the rider to toss the towrope back into the boat, the Wave started a new era in water sports. The Centurion team marketed the Wave as the first truly dedicated boat for wake surfing and people took notice.

The boat also caught the attention of ocean surfers, who saw this new style of riding as a way to train during periods of swell lull. In fact, the surf team from Rusty Surfboards in San Diego was invited out to test the Wave soon after it launched and it didn't take long for the perpetual wave to wear out the legs of anyone who challenged her. From this event, a champion of the day was crowned and competitive wake surfing took off.

In the following spring, the World Wake Surfing Championship was organized and held at a lake in central California. By the

It wasn't always this good for today's hottest water sport. While some ocean surfers were using boats as early as the mid 1950s to get their thrill behind the family runabout, waterskiing dominated the watersports world. Being pulled by a boat on a pair of skis was really cool and some thought even dare-devilish.

Through the 1970s and '80s, slalom skiing was the most popular water sport.

The allure of surfing resurged in the mid 1980s when Tony Finn, an ocean surfer from southern California developed a new board for the boat called the Skurfer. Even though Finn sold millions, Skurfers were difficult for most people to ride

because their construction was too buoyant. In the early 1990s, Herb O'Brien, a ski maker, took the process by which skis were made and applied it to a board shaped more like a Skurfer creating the first compression-molded wakeboard. The compression-molded product was "neutrally buoyant," floating just beneath the water's surface making the board much easier to launch. Armed with an easier board to ride, wakeboarding became an overnight sensation.

In short order, wakeboarding overtook the water ski industry and before long every ski manufacturer, along with others including some snowboard manufacturers, were making wakeboards. Wakeboarding enjoyed dazzling popularity during the 1990s overshadowing water ski sales by more than three to one. Boat manufacturers joined in and began to build boats that would produce larger wakes for



early 2000s the World Wake Surfing Championship was attracting nearly 100 competitors and producing champions in multiple divisions with substantial cash purses.

(Continued on page 16)



wakeboarding versus the smaller wake boats of their water ski cousins. Tow boats improved by adding a tower for a more upward pull angle and ballast tanks to push the hull deeper in the water producing even bigger wakes and wakeboarding became the world's fastest growing action sport.

ESPN caught on and included wakeboarding in the X Games, as did NBC with their Gravity Games. Magazines sprouted and helped to make rock stars out of the best riders. Today, some are still living on the residuals of their prime years in the '90s.

Through all this, wake surfing remained the core sport behind all wake sports. Those that participated in the early days had no idea of what would one day become the norm. You see, riding on a 10-foot board behind a 16-foot outboard with a very small wake may have been fun at the time, but it pales in comparison to the jaw-dropping antics of today's wake surfers. Top athletes are able to "Ollie" (a term that was originated from skateboarding where the rider hops the board into the air unassisted) some three feet above a four-foot wave! More recent



top maneuvers include adding 720-degree spins and shuvits (a skateboarding trick where the skateboarder makes the board spin 180 degrees, or more, under his or her feet) in the process.

The World Wake Surfing Championship has helped foster the growth of wake surfing by creating a competitive arena where those with exceptional skills can stand out amongst their peers. It's not only about recognition either. The 2012 Championship offered \$40,000 cash and over \$20,000 in prizes! Wake surfing is big time business for men and women, children and even masters – a term for those over 50!

For most water sports participants wake surfing is just plain fun. The excitement and thrill that one gets after tossing the towrope back into the boat is indescribable. Once mastered, the joy provided by carving back and forth across the wake's face is unparalleled, but most wake surfers tell me that they like the laid back, easygoing style that wake surfing conveys.

Most have experience in other water sports and have grown to appreciate the low impact and slow speeds of wake surfing over their former water sports love. Crashes at 15 mph are far easier on the body than those at 25 or 36 mph, the speeds for wakeboarding and water skiing.

If you are looking for something new this summer, wake surfing could be the activity that you have been craving. It's important to note that wake surfing is very safe when done properly. Remember, it's recommended that you wake surf behind an inboard or v-drive powered boat. Second, always

wear an approved life jacket when participating in water sports of any kind.

When it comes to equipment, most water sports pro shops carry a wide variety of wake surfboards. Boards are designed for your height, weight and particular surfing style. Any pro shop employee from a reputable dealership can help you get the right board for you and your family.

For more information about water sports and wake surfing in particular, please visit the Water Sports Industry Association website at www.wsia.net.*



In wake surfing, the board has no foot straps. Once the participant is up, he or she tosses the tow rope back into the boat and surfs the boat's wake.



What's legal?

Wake surfing is one of the hottest water sports in America. The following checklist for boaters should help you and your officers understand what's appropriate and legal before making a stop.

- Always consider using an inboard or v-drive powered boat.
- Never ride on the gunnels. This is not safe and it's illegal in some states.
- Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket when wake surfing.
- Never allow anyone to ride on the swim platform while the boat is in motion.
- Always carry an observer in your boat (some states require this).
- Adding weight or other ballast is necessary to produce a surf wake.
- Even though the surfer may not be connected to the vessel by a towrope, they are still considered to be bound by watersports laws for water-skiers and wakeboarders.

For more information about wake surfing and other enjoyable water sports, please contact the Water Sports Industry Association, a group dedicated to the safe and courteous use of America's waterways since 1982, at 407.251.9039 or via www.wsia.net.

*Wake surfing, often considered the predecessor to wakeboarding, is making a comeback in the United States.
WSIA photos*



PARTNER PERSPECTIVES

*By Larry Meddock
Executive Director
Water Sports Industry Association*

The Water Sports Industry Association, More Relevant than Ever

Over 30 years ago, two boat manufacturers got together to discuss issues that both thought could have adverse effects on their businesses. From that short, unselfish chance meeting the Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA) was born. You could say the rest is history – a very good, and increasingly more relevant, history, I might add!

In the 1980s, when the WSIA's first Board of Directors was formed, they quickly found that the WSIA needed an office and a personality for the association. After a careful search, the elders stumbled onto the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA) in West Palm Beach, Florida. A formal invitation to run the WSIA was proposed. The SGMA agreed to adopt watersports and assigned its management duties to Jim Hotchkiss, who became the WSIA's first executive director. Hotchkiss served in this capacity for over 20 years, retiring in 2003.

Shortly after the new arrangement, the SGMA launched the *Super Show*, a mega-trade show for all sports and, because the WSIA was a member of the SGMA, the WSIA was offered an ownership position in that show. That show became the WSIA's major source of revenue for many

years. In the beginning, the WSIA started out as the Water *Ski* Industry Association. In the mid-1990s, the SGMA asked if the WSIA would consider changing its name to the Water *Sports* Industry Association. The reason, they explained was so the SGMA could share more revenue with the WSIA from other non-towable manufacturers that wanted to show their products at the Super Show.

It took the Board of Directors about two seconds to make that call and because of the similarity of the words both beginning with the letter "S," we didn't even have to change our logo.

In 1994, the WSIA approached the leadership of Surf Expo, a water sports trade show for the action sports industry, to see if the WSIA could join them and exhibit at their shows. Surf Expo produces the best action sports shows on the planet and with the emergence of wakeboarding, the WSIA thought this would be a much better fit for its members than the traditional boat shows that were available at the time.

Today, the WSIA includes approximately 300 members. The Board of Directors is comprised of the "who's who" of towed water sports. Six boat manufacturers, five board and ski manufacturers, two

engine manufacturers, two cable park equipment manufacturers and two leading media companies are but a part of the WSIA Board of Directors, which includes 27 members. The WSIA produces three industry trade shows, one with Surf Expo and two on its own.

The WSIA currently represents all towed water sports. That includes water-skiing, wakeboarding, wakesurfing, wakeskating, knee boarding, tubing, cable parks, parasailing and towboats. We even offer leadership for our newest division, Camps and Schools.

The WSIA's core work is in risk management and defending waterway usage rights. The WSIA has developed warning labels for most of its members' products. All tubes, skis, ropes, handles, bindings and boards have custom warning labels developed by the WSIA through its general counsel. This extremely valuable and relevant service has saved millions in liability damages while making watersports safer. Additionally, the Water Sports Responsibility Code, which is usually seen as a poster in retail showrooms, was developed by the WSIA to promote safety in a clear and concise message.

When the cable park and parasail industries came to the WSIA seeking leadership and support, it was a natural and seamless transition for the WSIA to use existing products by slightly modifying their language to accommodate the new activities. Now, the WSIA has a responsibility code for cable and parasail operators as well as warning labels and caution signs. In addition, the WSIA offers liability waivers to both cable and parasail operators along with site signage explaining the inherent risks involved with the activities.

The WSIA is an active member of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, the National Safe Boating Council, and the Personal Flotation Device Manufacturers Association. Additionally, from 2004 until 2010 the WSIA served on the National Boating Safety Advisory Council, a Department of Homeland Security appointment. The WSIA has produced three safety video tutorials for law enforcement agencies and is currently working on its first safety video for consumers.

The relationship with the state boating law administrators has been especially fruitful for the WSIA. We supply training to law enforcement officials and they have helped us with waterway rights issues. Both have made the WSIA more relevant to the industry we serve.

One of the most challenging projects to date for the WSIA was helping to develop national standards for the parasail industry. The U.S. Coast Guard approached the WSIA several years ago to request support with an effort in conjunction with ASTM International

(formerly known as the American Society for Testing and Materials, or ASTM) to develop National Safety Standards for Parasailing using the ASTM model. The WSIA agreed to help, and after 14 months of hard work, many lengthy teleconference calls and face-to-face meetings, the first Weather Standard for Parasailing was approved in April. Three additional standards are in the queue and should be ready by next spring.

The WSIA is very proud of its work for its members. Today, member services reach a broad spectrum of important issues. As American waterway usage increases, it stands to reason that conflicts will also continue to rise. When it comes to towed water sports activities, the WSIA is poised to offer constructive advice to both the participant and the local entity or organization that thinks water sports should occur elsewhere. Over the years, the WSIA has learned that when emotion enters, logic is unfortunately thrown out.

Waterway rights issues are our number one call. We take each one very seriously and have been able to boast a 99% success ratio.

In addition to all this, the WSIA has a very healthy relationship with the U.S. Coast Guard. For more than a dozen years, the WSIA has partnered with the Coast Guard on boating safety including managing a U.S. Coast Guard public outreach boating safety grant of more than \$750,000, now in its third year.

From its humble beginning the WSIA has grown to being recognized by and associated with boating's largest and most influential organizations. The WSIA has become a relevant partner to the success of countless businesses and industry jobs. The watersports market is rebounding and with its better economic outlook, the WSIA sees endless possibilities to grow in both members and services for broader audiences that will one day give the term "relevant" new meaning.

For more information on the WSIA, please visit www.wsia.net or call headquarters at 407.251.9039. ✨



WATERSPORTS RESPONSIBILITY CODE

Be aware that there are risks in boating and Watersports that good judgment and personal awareness can help reduce.
To increase your enjoyment of Watersports, follow the ten elements of the Code.

In Watersports it is your responsibility to:

- **ALWAYS** familiarize yourself with applicable laws, waterways and inherent risks
- **ALWAYS** have a capable observer in addition to driver and agree on hand signals
- **ALWAYS** wear a USCG type III, ISO or other agency approved (PFD) life jacket
- **ALWAYS** read user's manual and inspect equipment before use
- **ALWAYS** ski or ride under control, at proper speeds and within your limits
- **ALWAYS** turn ignition off when anyone is near watercraft power drive unit
- **ALWAYS** stay clear of engine exhaust to avoid Carbon Monoxide poisoning
- **NEVER** "Platform Drag" or touch swim platform while the engine is running
- **NEVER** ski or ride near swimmers, shallow water, other boats, or obstacles
- **NEVER** operate watercraft, ski or ride under the influence of alcohol or drugs

Recreational Boating *Fatalities*: It's up,

Headlines One Year Ago

By Virgil Chambers
Executive Director
National Safe Boating Council

Today's Headlines

What a difference a year makes! In May of this year, the U.S. Coast Guard released its 2012 Recreational Boating Statistics, revealing that boating fatalities that year totaled 651, the lowest number of boating fatalities on record. Wow! A decrease of 107 lives lost! That is quite a difference no matter how you look at it.

Of course, even one death on the water is a serious and senseless loss of human life, especially when it can be prevented through responsible actions. With all our extensive efforts, we continue to lose an average of 700 people each year in boating accidents. However, if you consider that roughly 73 million people boat each year, you have to celebrate recreational boating as a safe form of recreation.

So why such a difference in boating fatalities in just one year? What happened in 2011 to give us a 13-year high and what happened in 2012 to give us the record low? It is estimated that authorities receive information about only 20 percent of non-fatal boating accidents but capture nearly 100 percent of fatal accidents. Since the data is more complete, let's focus on boating 'fatalities' and not all reportable 'accidents.'



So again, why such a fluctuation? If you look at five-year averages, fatalities appear to have leveled off but continue a slight downward trend. Safe boating practices appear to improve. Some experts theorize that annual fluctuations indicate 'bad years' for boating which might mean anything from weather extremes of drought or flood to lack of participation due to the economy. "If participation is down," it is theorized, "then fatalities are typically down."

While I believe those factors play a part in the numbers, I believe we also must take into account human behavior. Take, for example, the 2012 number of 651 fatalities, the lowest number of fatalities on record. Why? Did we do a better job of educating the boater to think and boat responsibly? Was the weather just not favorable to people going boating? The boating safety community works very hard to heighten awareness of boating safely every year. But in addition to the

it's down – what is *really* happening?

2011 Recreational Boating Fatalities, at Highest Level Since 1998: Coast Guard Statistics for 2011 show too many perishing, injured.

Washington – Total boating fatalities last year rose to 758, the highest number on record since 1998, according to the U.S. Coast Guard's official 2011 Recreational Boating Statistics released here Tuesday, May 15, 2012.

2012 Recreational Boating Statistics Report shows lowest number of fatalities, overall drop in accidents and injuries.

Washington – The U.S. Coast Guard released its 2012 Recreational Boating Statistics Monday, revealing that boating fatalities that year totaled 651, the lowest number of boating fatalities on record.



USCG photos

boating safety communities' significant effort, I believe we are seeing results of extensive media coverage resulting from the accidents of the previous year. When 2011 statistics were released in May 2012, the shocking message was "accidents are going up, be careful out there." That message, along with the memory of boating mishaps from the previous year, caught boaters' attention. I believe they remembered and took the message to heart. The media plays a big part on how

the boaters perceive what they should do to be safe and enjoy the waterways.

Here is THE real eye-opener, according to the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA): Boating participation in 2012 was up. Based on this, you can no longer assume that 'more boaters equal more accidents.' With this evidence, it is time to change our mantra to 'more responsible boaters equal LESS accidents.'

Many people believe what they read and hear: Tell them it's dangerous, they proceed with caution. Tell them: There is no problem to worry about, they become complacent. We need to let them know that boating is fun when properly (safely) done. There is risk, as with anything we do, but it can be easily managed through education and knowledge. Most people will heed the messages and this wonderful activity of recreational boating, whether it be power, sail or manual will give us and our families years of enjoyment.

I join my colleagues across North America in celebrating the 2012 reduction in boating fatalities. And I express my thanks to the nation's boaters for listening and changing behavior in ways that resulted in these reduced 2012 numbers. I hope that this good news does not make

us feel satisfied. Instead, we must continue to reinforce positive boater behavior throughout the 2013 boating season. Let's celebrate the fact that fatalities were down while driving down the trend line of boating fatalities over the next five years. *

BOATING

Briefs

NTSB proposes tougher drunk-driving threshold

On May 14, 2013, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) released a bold set of targeted interventions to put the country on a course to eliminate alcohol-impaired highway driving crashes. The 19 recommendations call for stronger laws, swifter enforcement and expanded use of technology.

One key recommendation is for all 50 states to adopt a blood-alcohol content (BAC) cutoff of 0.05 compared to the 0.08 standard on the books today and used by law enforcement and the courts to prosecute drunk driving.

"Most Americans think that we've solved the problem of impaired driving, but in fact, it's still a national epidemic," NTSB Chairman Deborah A.P. Hersman said. "On average, every hour one person is killed and 20 more are injured."

Research shows that although impairment begins with the first drink, by 0.05 BAC, most drivers experience a decline in both cognitive and visual functions, which significantly increases the risk of a serious crash. Currently, over 100 countries on six continents have BAC limits set at 0.05 or lower. "The research clearly shows that drivers with a BAC above 0.05 are impaired and at a significantly greater risk of being involved in a crash where someone is killed or injured," said Hersman.

The NTSB issued 10 safety recommendations and reiterated nine others to NHTSA, the

International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety, all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

The report, "Reaching Zero: Actions to Reduce Alcohol-Impaired Driving," is available at <http://go.usa.gov/TeQe>.

Boating enthusiasts set new life jacket world record

Boating safety enthusiasts set a new world record for life jacket wear during the fourth annual "Ready, Set, Wear It!" Life Jacket World Record Day on May 18, 2013. At nearly 200 events around the globe, 5,774 people inflated their inflatable life jacket or wore an inherently buoyant life jacket, breaking the world record for life jacket wear.

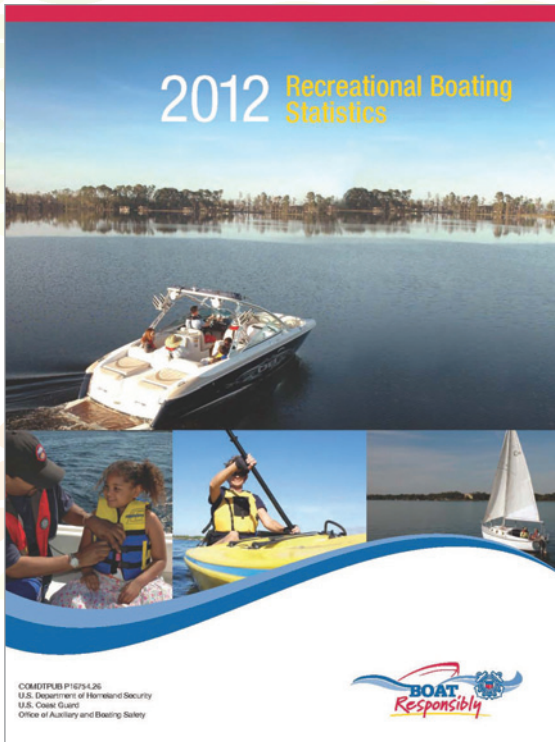
Hosted by the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC), in partnership with the Canadian Safe Boating Council (CSBC), "Ready, Set, Wear It!" ushered in National Safe Boating Week. These events are part of a yearlong effort, the North American Safe Boating Campaign ("Wear It!"), which brings together boating safety partners across the U.S. and Canada to promote safe and responsible boating, including voluntary wear of life jackets.

The previous world record of 3,993 participants was set during last year's event.

The North American Safe Boating Campaign is produced under a grant from the Sports Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.



Coast Guard report shows lowest number of fatalities on record, overall drop in accidents and injuries



The U.S. Coast Guard released its 2012 Recreational Boating Statistics, revealing that boating fatalities totaled 651, the lowest number of boating fatalities on record. From 2011 to 2012, deaths in boating-related accidents decreased from 758 to 651, a 14.1 percent decrease; injuries decreased from 3,081 to 3,000, a 2.6 percent reduction; and the total reported recreational boating accidents decreased from 4,588 to 4,515, a 1.6 percent decrease.

The fatality rate for 2012 of 5.4 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels reflected a 12.9 percent decrease from the previous year's rate of 6.2 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels. Property damage totaled approximately \$38 million.

To view the 2012 Recreational Boating Statistics, go to http://www.uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.aspx.

Washington gets tough on boating under the influence

On May 16, 2013, Governor Jay Inslee signed SB 5437, a three-part bill that changes Washington's boating safety laws and gets tough on boaters operating under the influence. The changes went into effect on July 28, 2013.

Most notably, the bill strengthens Washington's boating under the influence (BUI) law by making the penalty for BUI a gross misdemeanor punishable by a maximum fine of \$5,000 and 364 days in jail. Additionally, the law now allows for implied consent, which means an officer can require a boat operator to take a breath or blood test if the officer believes the operator is boating under the influence. If the operator refuses, he/she could be issued a \$1,000 civil infraction.

"Washington has a long history of being a maritime state. We need to keep boating safe and fun, and this legislation will help us do that. I'm delighted that by working with our state partners and boating stakeholders, we were able to develop legislation that everyone could agree to," said Washington State Parks Director Don Hoch.

"The cultural, economic and recreational significance of Washington state waterways can't be overemphasized. Likewise, neither can boating safety. The passage of this measure provides law enforcement with additional tools and strengthens our commitment to limiting tragedies on waterways," said Bruce Bjork, chief of police

for the Department of Fish and Wildlife, an agency that played a key role in writing and promoting the legislation.

Lastly, the law gives marine law enforcement officers the ability to hold negligent or reckless boaters accountable and the authority to issue citations for vessel accidents they did not witness. Now, when an officer is investigating a vessel accident, like a vessel-to-vessel collision, and it's determined a boat operator caused the accident by breaking a boating safety law, the officer can arrest the operator for criminal violations or issue a citation for an infraction.

"This is a great change and something we've needed for a long time. We've had this authority on land, but we lacked it on the water. I think this is really going to help us educate boaters about the importance of the boating rules of the road," said Ed Holmes, Mercer Island police chief and president of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.

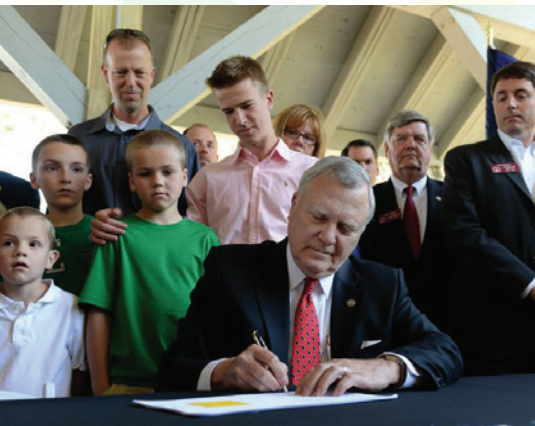
According to State Parks data, alcohol is a factor in 30 percent of boating fatalities. The law change was intended to deter BUI by increasing the penalty and introducing implied consent in the form of a monetary penalty - not tied to the driver's license. Other changes to the law include:

- Testing language consistent with driving under the influence procedures.
- Marijuana references added.
- Test refusal is not admissible in court.
- Recreational vessel rentals must have all safety equipment, be properly registered and meet all other state requirements.



(Continued on page 24)

New law strengthens public safety on Georgia's waterways



On April 23, 2013, Georgia governor Nathan Deal signed SB 136, a bill that lowers the blood-alcohol content limit for boaters from .10 to .08 and increases penalties for those caught boating while intoxicated. The legislation also serves to educate the public on boater safety and guidelines.

"Far too many tragedies have occurred as a result of boating under the influence and inadequate boater education," Deal said. "Last June, I vowed to work with the General Assembly to pass legislation in honor of Jake and Griffin Prince, who lost their lives last summer in a tragic accident. As I have said, if you are too drunk to drive an automobile, you are too drunk to drive a boat."

The Jake and Griffin Prince BUI Law is the portion of the bill that lowers the blood-alcohol content limit to match the requirements for Georgia's automobile drivers. Previously, Georgia was one of only eight states that allowed a higher BAC limit for boating than for driving.

Another section of the legislation, known as the Kile Glover Boat Education Law, honors the young boy who was struck and killed by a jet watercraft last summer on Lake Lanier. The statute requires a boater safety education course for all motorized vessel operators born on or after Jan. 1, 1998, and it mandates that youths 13 years old and under wear life jackets on a moving boat.

Kansas reduces vessel tax

The property tax on boats and other watercraft in Kansas will be cut from 30 percent of appraised value to 11.5 percent next year. Boat taxes will be phased down to 5 percent in 2015 and beyond. The new watercraft tax system is part of a property tax bill signed by Gov. Sam Brownback on May 8, 2013.

Kansas boaters were paying 30 percent of the valuation of a vessel times the mill levy for the county. This was forcing many boat owners to seek alternative registration options. A prevalent option was for owners to keep their vessels in neighboring states to avoid the high tax rate.

After many years of working with state, county, and private organizations, a bill was introduced for a constitutional amendment change for the citizens of Kansas to vote to change the current (30%) assessment rate on vessels used in Kansas. This bill passed in favor of the change in September of 2012.



Proposed language was brought forth in a bill on the Kansas House and a special committee was assigned to work on the details. After many debates and proposals a final version was produced, passed through the Senate and signed by the governor.

The new law will change the taxation rate for vessels in Kansas from the current 30% rate to 11.5% in 2014 and 5% in 2015 and thereafter. This new rate will place Kansas in a more competitive arena with neighboring states and, in most cases, will provide a better cost savings.

The most important part of this legislation is to bring boaters back to compliance and to return to using Kansas lakes and streams, which are teeming with vast recreational opportunities.

California Boating & Waterways merges into State Parks



July 1, 2013 marked an important milestone for the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) and the California Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW). It is the date in which Boating and Waterways officially became a division under State Parks. The merger was undertaken to bring activities related to recreational boating and parks into one agency and under one leader, adding significant efficiencies by combining and streamlining duplicative functions, thereby reducing costs and saving taxpayer dollars.

US Coast Guard issues Navigation Light Safety Alert



The Coast Guard has recently become aware of the uninspected towing vessel industry using inappropriate navigation lights that fail to meet the criteria for use onboard any vessel – SEACHOICE Products LED Navigation Light, SCP

#03201. Online research shows many outlets for the sale of this product. It is possible that this product may be in widespread use in the recreational boating industry as well.

The SEACHOICE Products and other catalogs advertise it as an “LED classic navigation light.” The package indicates incorrect usage as a “masthead light.” When web-searched the retrieved information presents it as a “masthead” or “navigation” light. Neither of these applications are correct and the fixture should not be used on any vessel in an effort to meet the navigation rules. Masthead lighting requires an arc of 225 degrees visibility and stern lighting requires an arc of 135 degrees visibility, for a total range of 360 degrees visibility. Depending on the type of vessel there are also light, color and range of visibility requirements.

The SEACHOICE product SCP 03201 has an arc of 180 degrees visibility and is not applicable to any requirement. The Coast Guard strongly recommends that owners/operators of any vessel who installed this particular SEACHOICE product (#03201 only) as a masthead, stern or other type of navigation light to remove it and replace it with a proper light that meets the requirements for the vessel and application.

Recreational boaters who have questions should contact the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Commercial vessel owner/operators who have questions should contact the Coast Guard Sector or Marine Safety Unit.

New point of sale program developed to improve sales, boating safety



The top goal of both marine industry and boating safety professionals is to help today's boat buyers maximize their enjoyment when spending time on the water. Behind that goal is the simple understanding that proper education leads to a lifetime of fulfillment aboard a boat.

The National Safe Boating Council, in collaboration with the Marine Retailers Associations of the Americas and the Association of Marina Industries, has introduced its new Boat Pro Point of Sale training program. This online video series

provides time-efficient training opportunities designed to educate marina personnel, recreational boat dealers, marine retailers and others who sell products and services to boaters on how to educate their customers on today's safety equipment requirements.

The Boat Pro Point of Sale program is designed to educate sales professionals on how they can assist recreational boaters when it comes to making the right decisions about buying safety equipment and the contents of a U.S. Coast Guard safety kit. The knowledge and insight provided by the Boat Pro Point of Sale trained professionals will not only create greater boating enjoyment for the consumer, but will also provide numerous up-sell opportunities for the sales professionals and their businesses.

Boat Pro Point of Sale offers short, informative videos covering different marine safety products and concepts. After watching the videos, marine professionals can test their knowledge with a short exam, and once all seven sections are successfully completed, they will receive a certificate of completion and can receive continuing education credit. The program and website also feature a free safety education checklist to guide trained sales professionals on how to outfit the boater, as well as the boat. These and other features of the Boat Pro Point of Sale are available exclusively online at SafeBoatingCouncil.org/BoatProPointofSale.

Boat Pro Point of Sale was produced under a grant from the Sports Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Sea Tow Foundation Life Jacket Loaner Station Program receives donation

The Sea Tow Foundation's Life Jacket Loaner Station Program received a \$20,000 donation from Clare Rose Inc. of Yaphank, N.Y., one of the nation's largest beverage distributors, and American brewing giant Anheuser-Busch of St. Louis. This generous donation will enable the nonprofit Sea Tow Foundation to continue to make adult-sized life jackets available at Life Jacket Loaner Stations at Sea Tow locations, marinas, boat ramps, local police



and fire stations, and yacht clubs throughout Long Island, N.Y. This donation is especially meaningful as Sea Tow is celebrating its 30th anniversary throughout 2013.

The Sea Tow Foundation's national Life Jacket Loaner Station Program allows boaters to borrow life jackets to replace missing, damaged or ill-fitting personal flotation devices (PFDs), or to use for extra guests on board their boats.

“We are honored to be aligned with Clare Rose, a like-minded, local family-run business, and with Anheuser-Busch, which has been the industry leader in promoting alcohol responsibility on and off the water for the past 30 years,” said Sea Tow Founder and CEO, Captain Joe Frohnhoefer. “In addition to encouraging boaters to wear life jackets, we ask all boaters to Take the Pledge to Boat Responsibly and to Designate a Sober Skipper.”

“Boating safety and responsibility are important to Anheuser-Busch and its wholesalers,” said Carol Huebner, region director for Corporate Social Responsibility in the Northeast, Anheuser-Busch. “We are proud to support Sea Tow International and its Life Jacket Loaner Station Program, which has already impacted the lives of more than 15,000 people. By wearing life jackets and designating a skipper, we can all help ensure even more boaters and passengers enjoy their time on the water safely.” ✨

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BOAT Program delivers Tactical Operator Courses in California

By Deputy David Guthrie
Sacramento County Sheriff's Department

Four Tactical Operator Courses were recently presented by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) to local law enforcement agencies. Funding for this training was secured by the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department via FEMA's Port Security Grant Program FY2011, so there was no cost to the 17 agencies receiving this training beyond officers' time and boat fuel.

Through a regional coordination and as part of a national initiative to standardize training, typing, and credentialing of waterborne response teams, the NASBLA Tactical Operator Course (TOC) teaches the same tactics, techniques, and procedures that the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) uses to train its boat operators. This effort and training has institutionalized the region's seamless integration into security operations among federal, state, county, and local maritime law enforcement officers and agencies. Recognized by the USCG, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as the national standard, this training has created a true force multiplier for the San Francisco Bay and Delta region.

The Tactical Operator Course provides officers with skills in tactical boat operations for prevention, detection, response, and recovery capabilities during heightened security situations and acts of terrorism. Tactical knowledge ensures a successful outcome while also providing the officer personal safety. Having a unified training course that is recognized nationwide has provided consistency in boating tactics, which will be realized in operational integrity. This



course has addressed a significant gap in the maritime security capabilities for the San Francisco Bay and Delta region, by using existing resources as a force multiplier for the U.S. Coast Guard to protect and defend high value assets and critical infrastructure, and deter and prevent potential attacks on our nation's economic lifeline.

The 80 students scheduled for the course were divided into four groups based upon their area of operation. Seventy-one students successfully completed all phases of the training (six students did not complete the course due to last-minute cancellations). One student dropped out due to a minor injury and two supervisors were called away to their agencies for urgent business.

Twenty-four patrol vessels from participating agencies were utilized during the training course, with fuel costs covered by the agencies supplying the vessels. The classrooms were provided at no cost by local businesses and the Contra Costa Sheriff's Office. The moving High Value Assets were provided by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Oakland Fire Department, and the San Francisco Fire Department.

The students took an incoming knowledge test on the subject matter; the



overall class average was 11%. The overall class average on the final exam was 97.05%.

Visiting dignitaries from the U.S. Coast Guard included Rear Admiral Karl Schultz, Captain Cynthia Stowe (COTP), Captain Greg Stump (COTP), Lieutenant Commander Andy Vanskike, and BMCS Mark Spillane.

The next step is to maintain proficiency of the perishable skills learned. All of the students, and the visiting dignitaries, were encouraged to reach out to each other and continue training together on a regular basis.*

The law enforcement agencies (and number of students) participating in the NASBLA Tactical Operator Course:

- California Highway Patrol (3)
- California State Parks (3)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (19)
- Contra Costa Sheriff's Office (3)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (4)
- Oakland Police Department (3)
- Richmond Police Department (2)
- Sacramento County Sheriff's Department (3)
- Sacramento Police Department (2)
- San Francisco Police Department (5)
- San Joaquin Sheriff's Office (6)
- San Mateo Sheriff's Office (4)
- Sausalito Police Department (2)
- Solano Sheriff's Office (4)
- Sonoma County Sheriff's Office (4)
- Suisun Police Department (2)
- Yolo County Sheriff's Office (2)

Total Agencies = 17	Total Operators = 71
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By Wayne Stacey
Operations Branch
Boating Safety Division
Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety
U.S. Coast Guard



coast guard COMMENTS

U.S. Sailing leads the way in developing on-water training standards

When the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program highlighted the need for on-water boat operation training to complement classroom education, it also identified an opportunity to galvanize the recreational boating community. In 2011, U.S. Sailing was awarded the first grant to help fill one of the education gaps noted in the plan by facilitating the process for developing consensus-built on-water training standards. Since then, the U.S. Coast Guard's boating safety partners have successfully come together as a team to advance agreement on entry-level, skill-based, on-water standards for sail, power and human-propelled recreational boating.

It was clear at the outset that success in building consensus within the recreational boating community required a neutral, all-inclusive approach and an in-depth quality process. A professional facilitator was engaged to manage the process and now leads a core 43-person Subject Matter Expert (SME) Team with members from across the three domains of recreational boating. SME Team members are from multiple nationally recognized boating organizations affiliated with community, non-government/non-profit organizations, federal and state agencies, industry, professional schools, as well as the public sector.

The four-stage process being used to develop the on-water training standards is thorough, detailed and disciplined and follows the American National Standards

Institute (ANSI) guidelines. The process produces four versions of the standards, each one an improvement on the previous version. The process is designed to help obtain the broad consensus needed to develop a national set of standards working across the three domains, as well as to ensure the use of unique and deep knowledge, expertise and experience working within individual domains.

Specifically, after the SME Team agrees to the initial skill-based, performance Standards (Version 1) within a domain, a nationwide content validation study is conducted. Input and feedback from that survey is then analyzed and incorporated to produce Standards (Version 2).

Standards Versions 3 and 4 involve field-testing the standards to ensure they work on the water, including development of a three-level rubrics structure to assess actual standards performance. Once beta-tested (Version 3), the standards and rubrics are field-tested at six venues across the country, on different types of waterways with different boat operators to ensure they will function on the water and at a national level (Version 4).

Once Version 4 of the standards is developed, the set will undergo ANSI approval. The standards will then be maintained and available for use by anyone interested in designing and delivering instructional programs consistent with the highest quality

standards for developing skilled, knowledgeable and safer boaters.

Also as part of the on-water training standards grant design process, a structure to organize the extensive work already generated by the boating safety partners with the new work being developed was created—A National System of Standards for Recreational Boat Operation. This system allows complementary coordination and integration of on-water, experienced-based instruction and classroom knowledge/theory-based teaching in one all-encompassing repository.

To this point, over 600 people from around the country have been involved in the on-water training standards development process. The SME Team encourages and welcomes all to participate. I am extremely pleased with the amount of work this group has done. I am also very appreciative of the expert guidance that Mr. Brian Dorval has provided in facilitating this diverse group of mariners. Dorval illustrated his consummate communication skills early on in an icebreaker exercise in which he instructed the group on how to juggle by relying on their communication and listening skills.

For more information about the On-Water Training Standards Development Program or the National Recreational Boating Safety Program's Strategic Plan, please contact Wayne Stacey, grant technical manager at 202.372.1067 or wayne.a.stacey@uscg.mil. *

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2013-14 Recreational Boating Safety Calendar

2013 August

18-21
International Sailing Summit
San Francisco, California
www.sailamerica.com
info@sailamerica.com
401.289.2540

21-25
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary National Conference
San Diego, California
<http://cgauxa.org/nacon>
auxcen@sbcglobal.net
314.962.8828

26-28
Homeland Security Outlook Maritime Security 2013 – West
San Diego, California
www.maritimesecurity2013.com
customerservice@hsoutlook.com
203.221.2664

September 1-8

United States Power Squadrons Governing Board Meeting
San Antonio, Texas
<http://www.usps.org/>

12-13
NASBLA Education Standards Panel Meeting
Boise, Idaho
www.nasbla.org/ESP
esp@nasbla.org

14
NASBLA Executive Board Meeting
Boise, Idaho
www.nasbla.org
ron@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

14-18
NASBLA Annual Conference
Boise, Idaho
www.nasbla.org
info@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

19-20
NSBC/NASBLA Boating Safety Instructor Certification Course
Boise, Idaho
http://safeboatingcouncil.org/training_instructor.php
office@safeboatingcouncil.org

23-25
Canadian Safe Boating Council Annual Symposium
Whistler, British Columbia
csbc.ca

23-26
NASBLA Comprehensive Boating Accident Investigation Course
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
www.nasbla.org
chris@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

27-29
American Canoe Association National Paddlesports Conference
Bend, Oregon
www.americancanoe.org

October

12
National Boating Federation Executive Committee Meeting
Cleveland, Ohio
www.n-b-f.org/meetings
313.770.4769

14-18
NASBLA Advanced Boating Accident Investigation Course
Phoenix, Arizona
www.nasbla.org
chris@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

Register now for NASBLA's 54th Annual Conference
September 14-18, 2013
Boise, Idaho
www.nasbla.org



16-19
US Sailing Annual Meeting
Captiva, Florida
www.ussailing.org
KatieOuellette@ussailing.org
401.683.0800

25-27
American Canoe Association Swiftwater Rescue Conference
Sylva, North Carolina
www.americancanoe.org
whitewatersam@gmail.com

November 6
National Recreational Boating Safety Coalition Meeting
Washington, D.C.
NRBSCoalition@aol.com
202.257.2836

7-8
Parasail Operators Symposium
St. Petersburg Beach, Florida
www.wsia.net

2014

January 26- February 2
United States Power Squadrons Annual Meeting
Jacksonville, Florida
<http://www.usps.org>

February 19-20

NASBLA BLA Workshop
www.nasbla.org
info@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

March 19-21

National Drowning Prevention Alliance Educational Conference
Orlando, Florida
<http://ndpa.org/home>

April 14-17

International Boating & Water Safety Summit
Nashville, Tennessee
<http://www.ibwss.org>

May 6-7

National Marine Manufacturers Association American Boating Congress
Washington, D.C.
<http://www.nmma.org/governme>
nt/abc/default.aspx

17-24
National Safe Boating Week
www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com

September 7-14

United States Power Squadrons Governing Board Meeting
Arlington, Virginia
<http://www.usps.org>

October

15-19
NASBLA Annual Conference
Bar Harbor, Maine
www.nasbla.org
info@nasbla.org
859.225.9487