

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
Public Affairs



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Press Release

FUNDAMENTALS OF RESPONSIBLE BOATING

Each year the US Coast Guard Auxiliary partners with the National Safe Boating Council and other organizations during National Safe Boating Week and throughout the year, to promote safe and responsible boating. We would like to remind the boating public that their safety depends on these FUNDAMENTALS.

Life Jackets Save Lives

In 2005, Coast Guard Statistics¹ indicate that drowning was the cause of 70% of that year's boating fatalities, and 87% of the drowning victims were not wearing their life jackets at the time. The Coast Guard estimates that 426 lives could have been saved in 2005 if these boaters had followed the first Fundamental Principle: WEAR IT!

While boating fatalities have been steadily decreasing over the past several years, many more would be prevented if everyone wore their life jacket every time they get out on the water. Life jackets save lives!

Boater Education Saves Lives

Missouri's Mandatory Boater Education Law took effect January 1, 2005, and requires that every Missouri resident born after January 1, 1984 who operates a vessel on Missouri lakes must carry a boating safety identification card issued by the State Water Patrol and a valid photo ID. This includes personal watercraft like Jet-Skis. The boating safety ID card indicates successful completion of a boating safety education course.

¹ Boating Statistics – 2005; 47th Annual Report, United States Coast Guard, Commandant Publication P16754.19, August 31, 2006

Members of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary will be offering the "boating courses". Successful completions of this course will not only earn the boating safety ID card, but will give you invaluable information, which will help you remain safe on the water.

Course Preregistration is necessary. Sign up or for more information by contacting www.auxpa.org

Safe Boats Save Lives

Know the federal and state requirements for operating a vessel, and make sure your boat or personal watercraft is in compliance. Have a Vessel Safety Check performed to ensure that your vessel meets these requirements and has all the necessary safety equipment on board and in good condition.

Members of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary will be conducting free Vessel Safety Checks. If you will not be available at this time, you can schedule a check by contacting www.cgaux.org

Sober Boating Saves Lives

Approximately one third of all recreational boating fatalities involve alcohol. Alcohol affects vision, coordination, balance and judgment. Alcohol will impair your ability to safely operate your boat even more than it impairs your ability to drive a car.

It is not just the operator drinking that poses a risk. **It is dangerous for your passengers to drink on the water as well!**

Alcohol's effect on your BALANCE can be critical on a boat. When you are "tipsy", the unstable, moving platform of the boat can easily cause you to fall overboard.

Alcohol also reduces your body's ability to protect you against the cold water. When you've been drinking, the numbing effects of cold water occur much faster than when you are sober. Within minutes, you may not be able to call for help, swim to a float, or reach the safety of the boat.

To learn more about boater education, Vessel Safety Checks and other services provided by the Coast Guard Auxiliary – or if you are interested in learning how to become one of us – please visit us online at www.cgaux.org

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is composed of uniformed, non-military volunteer civilians who assist the Coast Guard in all of its varied missions, except for military and direct law enforcement. These men and women can be found on the nation's waterways, in classrooms and on the dock, performing safety patrols, vessel safety examinations and public education. The 30,000 members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary donate millions of hours annually in support of Coast Guard missions.

www.safeboatingcampaign.com

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