**Boating Safety: Avoiding Tragedy on the Water**

It is a beautiful sunny day and you are enjoying time with your family boating on the river when suddenly disaster happens out of nowhere. It can be a sudden storm, a passenger fell overboard, or your boat is taking on water and beginning to sink. What do you do? There is no time to think; you must act quickly! It is a good thing you are prepared. You are a smart boater.

As a safe boater, you attended the [USCG Boating Safety Course](https://uscgboating.org/recreational-boaters/boating-safety-courses.php). You have all the proper safety equipment onboard and you have the information handy so you can contact the Coast Guard for assistance. You and your family make it home safely today because you ensured that all passengers were wearing life jackets and no one was bow riding. You had a life ring available to throw to the passenger who fell overboard. You contacted the Coast Guard on the radio using **VHF-FM Channel 16 (156.8 MHz) or via cell phone on 911. You used flares to help direct the Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary to your location. Tragedy avoided!**

***What safety equipment should a boater have onboard?***

* Life Jackets
* Registration and numbering
* Navigation lights
* Ventilation
* Fire extinguishers
* Distress signals (flares, horn, etc.)
* Battery cover and connections

***How does a boater know their boat is safe?***

**Contact your local US Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla for a *FREE* Vessel Safety Check.**

**For more information:** [USCGAUX: Vessel Safety Checks](https://cgaux.org/vsc/)