



## Boating Safety is our mission

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is dedicated to promoting recreational boating safety and education, while acting as a force multiplier in support of Coast Guard authorized missions.

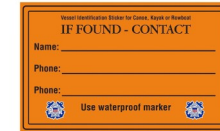
Our volunteers are available to provide courtesy vessel safety checks for recreational boaters and paddlers, teach boating education classes, offer talks on a variety of boating topics for community groups with the goal of boosting the knowledge, preparedness and safety-consciousness of local boaters, paddlers and anyone enjoying our Northwest waters. We have a variety of educational materials available for distribution at local marine dealers, marinas, clubs and other locations. We are always looking for new members, so let us know if you'd like to hear more about what we do and how to get involved.

## If Found - Contact

When the Coast Guard discovers an unmanned paddlecraft adrift, they have no way of knowing whether it washed off a dock or was separated from its owner during the course of a boating accident. The IF FOUND sticker provides a place for small craft owners to display their name, phone & cell phone numbers. The Coast Guard can use this information to determine whether an emergency exists, and to arrange for return of property to its owner.



DO YOUR PART AND BE 'STICKER' SMART



ALL paddle craft and small vessels should be marked with an 'IF FOUND' Sticker. This information can aid search and rescue crews in knowing who to look for if a kayak, canoe, paddle board or row boat is found without a person.

If you are *not* in distress and your paddle craft or small vessel has accidentally gone adrift, the contact information on the stickers can free up crews for other cases and save valuable resources and time.

Place the ID sticker in a conspicuous location on your vessel and fill out the information with a permanent waterproof marker. Make sure to include a second contact number of a person who would likely know your whereabouts. You can obtain an 'IF FOUND' sticker free of charge, from your local United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, by emailing your NAME and ADDRESS

to [iffoundsticker@d13cgaux.net](mailto:iffoundsticker@d13cgaux.net).

Paddlesport Safety Tip

## ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET

**Wear it Like a Pro**  
The first sign of a rookie paddler is someone who isn't wearing a life jacket. Experienced paddlers wear life jackets whenever they're on the water.

**Make it Fit**  
Adjust your life jacket so that it's snug and comfortable. It should not lift up when pulled by the shoulders. Modern life jackets come in all sizes, with models for children, women and men.

**Don't Tempt the Odds**

**85%** of fatal canoeing accidents and

**48%** of kayaking fatalities involve people who were not wearing a life jacket. Don't be a statistic. Wear your life jacket.





Kayaks, canoes, stand up paddle boards (SUPs) and other paddle craft offer great recreation on the water, but you must understand and prepare for the risks. The resources presented here can help you be prepared.

### Paddle Craft Safety Checks

You can schedule a vessel safety check (VSC) not only for power and sail boats but also for kayaks and other paddle craft. These inspections address legal requirements for your craft and equipment, as well as recommended equipment and practices. If your craft meets minimum requirements, a VSC Decal is issued indicating that you are in full compliance with federal and state boating laws. If deficiencies are found, they are noted in a written report for you, but no report is sent to federal or state agencies. Most importantly, this is a good opportunity to discuss your questions about paddle craft safety.

Follow the link below to sign-up for a Vessel Safety Check:

<https://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=V-DEPT&category=i-want-a-vsc>



Paddle sport participation has grown dramatically in recent years. Low entry cost, easy storage, less maintenance and flexibility are some of the reasons many people have decided to become paddlers, compared to power or sailing craft.

Paddle sports are on the rise, setting a record for the number of participants. About 22 million Americans — 7.4 percent of the population — enjoy paddling.



However, all of this growth in paddle sports has a dark side. Unlike power boats, with the growth in paddle sports, the number of fatalities has gone up. In the most recent reporting year, 2015, 29% of boating deaths were paddle craft related; in 2016, fatalities climbed even higher. Current efforts to reach the paddling public have fallen dramatically short. The Coast Guard Auxiliary Strategic Plan for 2021 focuses Auxiliary efforts on addressing the problem by expanding outreach to the paddle craft community.



Welcome! We are the Thirteenth District of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. This is one of the largest districts, in geographical area, covering four states in the Pacific Northwest: Washington, Oregon, Montana and Idaho. There are over 4,400 miles of shoreline from the mighty Pacific to lakes and navigable rivers. Our district is comprised of three sectors: Sector Puget Sound, Sector North Bend and Sector Columbia River.

Our responsibility to the U.S. Coast Guard, our Marine partners, and the boating public is to carry out our number one job: Recreational Boating Safety (RBS)!

