



United States Coast Guard
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

21 MAY 2021
FM: CHDIRAUX
TO: ALAUX
ALAUX 016/21

Subj: NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK

1. Please read the following ALCOAST about National Safe Boating Week. "Please boat safely."

Respectfully,
Captain Scott L. Johnson
Chief Director of Auxiliary (CG-BSX)

R 171851Z MAY 21
FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC
TO ALCOAST
BT
UNCLAS
ALCOAST 187/21
SSIC 16210

SUBJ: NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK

A. Recreational Boating Statistics, COMDTPUB P16754.33

B. Elijah Cummings Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2020, section 8316

C. COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC 221827Z MAR 21/ACN 030/21

1. National Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day is Friday, 21 May, and National Safe Boating Week (NSBW) is Saturday, 22 May, through Friday, 28 May. This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971. The message then was the same as it is now: "please boat safely." The five most important things you can do:

- a. Wear a life jacket,
- b. Educate yourself through knowledge and skills based training,
- c. Wear your engine cut off switch link,
- d. Abstain from using alcohol while underway, and
- e. Get a free vessel safety check from the USCG Auxiliary at:

<https://www.cgaux.org/vsc/>.

2. CG-BSX works extensively with the States and the recreational boating safety community on efforts to encourage model boating behavior. Through a \$126 million grant program, campaigns and enforcement target the desired outcomes in paragraph 1, and reach out to the American boating public in a variety of platforms. Please visit uscgboating.org to become more familiar with these efforts.

3. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a significant increase in boating activity in 2020. Boat sales reached recent record highs, with first-time boat buyers making up a larger percentage than at any time in the past ten years. The combination of record boat activity and sales, first-time boat owners, and difficulty receiving in-person education combined to also increase the number of accidents, injuries, and deaths. CY2020 deaths exceeded 2019 by 24%, and the deaths in June, July, and August 2020 were the highest in 23 years. Also, SAR cases increased by 10% even despite less commercial traffic, indicating that recreational boating cases were the most likely cause. Although boating continues to be a relatively safe activity, you can help make it safer.

4. Per REF (A), 79 percent of boating fatalities were drownings, and 86 percent of those were victims that were not wearing life jackets. Please encourage and incentivize life jacket wear. Just like seatbelt wear, you never know when you will need it, but when you do, it's critical. Most states require life jacket wear by children. For adults, an inflatable life jacket is not cumbersome and easy to don. REF (A), the 2019 Recreational Boating Statistics, may be found at: https://uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.php.

5. Virtual education classes hosted by the CG Auxiliary, found at: <http://www.cgaux.org/boatinged>, and the U.S. Power Squadrons at: <https://americasboatingclub.org/learn/online-boating-education>. The results have been very positive, as more students are now attending classes than when they were held in person.

6. This year, wearing an engine cut-off switch (ECOS) link became a requirement (REF (B) modified 43 U.S.C. §4312) while operating certain recreational vessels. If the vessel has an ECOS link, the operator most likely must wear it. (REF (C) and its supporting web site, found at: <https://uscgboating.org/recreational-boaters/engine-cut-off-devices.php> provides specific circumstances when wear is required and our enforcement posture during the initial roll out of this requirement). Each year, nearly 75 people die and 400 more are injured when they are struck by a propeller or a vessel. This requirement will help to reduce these tragedies.

7. Alcohol consumption remains the single-greatest contributing factor in recreational boating fatalities. Last year, 23 percent of deaths involved alcohol. Please encourage sober boating on our Nation's waters. If you are an operational unit, please participate in Operation Dry Water (ODW) during the 4th of July Holiday weekend. An ALCOAST will be released within 30 days of ODW providing details.

8. Please ensure that boaters know what safety requirements their boat must meet and recommend them to get a vessel safety check at: <https://www.cgaux.org/vsc/>

9. During National Safe Boating Week, all Coast Guard units and commands are encouraged to participate in activities and special events that highlight safe boating. Units are encouraged to collaborate with their District Recreational Boating Safety Specialists while planning National Safe Boating Week public outreach strategies and events such as Sector and Station open houses and Auxiliary involvement.

10. POC: Tom Dardis, COMDT (CG-BSX-2) at: (202) 372-1063 or thomas.j.dardis@uscg.mil.

11. RDML R. V. Timme, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy (CG-5P), sends.
12. Internet released is authorized.

For many reasons including the value of keeping communication lines clear and open as well as facilitating access to training and educational tools, all Auxiliarists are urged to have their own email address and to keep it updated in AUXDATA.

*All ALAUX's are posted on the Chief Director of Auxiliary web site located at: [CHDIRAUX ALAUX](#)

If you have a question regarding this ALAUX, please seek resolution within your Chain of Leadership and Management (COLM) including up to your servicing District Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX). If your question still cannot be resolved after that, then please email CGAUX@uscg.mil.