

The U.S. Coast Guard
reminds you...



YOU'RE IN COMMAND

BOAT RESPONSIBLY



YOU'RE IN COMMAND: BOAT RESPONSIBLY!

Nothing beats boating as a way to relax, have fun, enjoy the water, and bring friends and family together.



That's why it's so tragic when a recreational boating outing -- hunting, angling, paddling, or just cruising -- ends with an accident.

On average, two boaters are killed every day on America's waterways -- more than 700 per year. Thousands of others are





injured. Waterways are second only to highways as the scene of accidental deaths.

Too often these accidents happen when otherwise responsible, conscientious people make the serious mistake of assuming that their experience or



equipment is enough to keep them and their passengers safe.

As a boat owner or operator, *YOU* are responsible for your safety, the safety of your passengers, and other boaters.

That's why the U.S. Coast Guard reminds you, "You're in Command. Boat Responsibly!"

YOU'RE IN COMMAND: ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET

Accidents can happen without warning. There's rarely time to reach stowed life jackets.



It is estimated that approximately 86% of the recreational boaters that drowned were not wearing their life jacket. Overall, approximately 416 lives could have been saved if boaters had worn their life jackets.





That's why the U.S. Coast Guard recommends that boaters always wear a properly fitting U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket when on the water.



The latest life jackets come in a variety of shapes, colors, and sizes—even inflatable models. So there's no excuse not to wear one while boating!

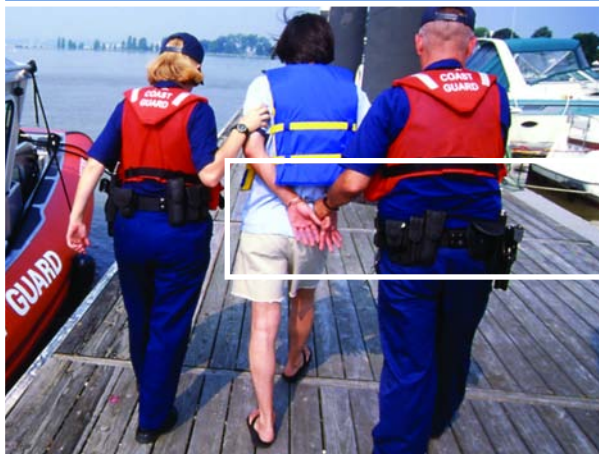
YOU'RE IN COMMAND: NEVER BOAT UNDER THE INFLUENCE

The sun, wind, noise, vibration, and motion common to the marine environment intensify the effect of alcohol,



drugs, and even some prescription medications. These “stressors” can cause fatigue and dramatically affect judgment, balance, coordination and reaction time.

Approximately one-third of fatal boating accidents involve Boating Under the Influence (BUI).





The U.S. Coast Guard and local law enforcement officials enforce state and federal Boating Under the Influence laws. Penalties can include possible monetary fines and/or imprisonment. Boaters need



to be aware that marine stressors can intensify the adverse side effects of medications for blood pressure and other conditions. Check with your physician for additional information.

YOU'RE IN COMMAND: TAKE A BOATING SAFETY COURSE

From boat handling to weather... from navigation to the "rules of the road"... educated boaters are safe boaters. Approximately 80% of all boating fatalities occurred on boats where the operator had never taken a boating safety course.

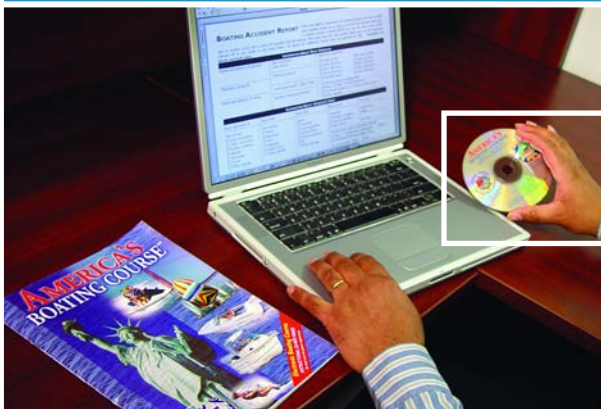
A wide variety of basic boating courses are available. Leading volunteer organizations such as the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and United States Power Squadrons®, as well as your own state boating agency, provide nationally recognized classes.

Are you too busy to attend a traditional classroom-based course? You can now





study at your own pace with courses that are available online or in interactive format. Many take less than eight hours to complete.



The U.S. Coast Guard recommends that all boat owners, operators and passengers take a boating safety course. You never know when it may be your responsibility to be in command of a situation on the water.

YOU'RE IN COMMAND: GET A VESSEL SAFETY CHECK

The Vessel Safety Check (VSC) is a free stem-to-stern inspection of your boat by a qualified member of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or United States Power Squadrons®.

It's your best way to learn about potential problems that might put you in violation of state or federal laws, or -- worse -- create possible danger for you or your passengers on the water.

The U.S. Coast Guard recommends that you maintain your boat year-round, and get a free Vessel Safety Check every year. The VSC typically takes only 20 minutes. In the following page you will find a handy list for your next check.





- Display of numbers
- Registration / documentation
- Life jackets (PFDs)
- Visual distress signals (VDS)
- Fire extinguishers
- Ventilation
- Backfire flame control
- Sound-producing devices
- Navigation lights
- Pollution placard
- MARPOL garbage placard
- Marine sanitation devices
- Presence of Navigation Rules
- Unique state and/or local requirements
- Overall vessel condition
- Deck free of hazards and clean bilge
- Safe electrical and fuel systems
- Safe galley and heating systems
- Marine VHF radio
- Dewatering device and backup
- Mounting of fire extinguishers
- Anchor and line for area
- First Aid and PIW kits
- Inland visual distress signals
- Capacity certificate of compliance
- Owner responsibility for accident reporting
- Offshore operations
- Nautical charts and navigation aids
- Survival and first aid tips
- Fueling and fuel management
- Float plan filing and weather and sea conditions
- Insurance considerations
- Boating checklist
- Boating safety classes

YOU'RE IN COMMAND: CARBON MONOXIDE— CAN HARM YOU

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas. Prolonged exposure to low concentrations or very short exposure to high concentrations can kill you.

Sources on your boat may include engines, gas generators, cooking ranges, space and water heaters.

Early symptoms of CO poisoning include irritated eyes, headache, nausea, weakness, and dizziness. They are often confused with seasickness or intoxication, so those affected may not receive the medical attention they need.

CO can accumulate anywhere in or around your boat -- including on back decks, swim platforms, or in the water around generator exhausts. CO can remain in or around your boat at dangerous levels even if your engine or another boat's engine is no longer running!



How can you protect others and yourself?

- Know where and how CO may accumulate in and around your boat.
- If you can smell engine exhaust, you are inhaling CO.
- Follow all warnings and instructions for canvas, engine operation, etc.
- Maintain fresh air circulation throughout the boat at all times, even when the air conditioning is on.
- Know where your engine and generator exhaust outlets are located and keep everyone away from these areas.
- Stay off the back deck and the swim platform while the engines are running.
- Never enter areas under swim platforms, where exhaust outlets are located, unless the area has been properly ventilated.
- Although CO can be present without the smell of exhaust fumes, if exhaust fumes are detected on the boat, take immediate action to ventilate these fumes.
- Treat symptoms of seasickness as possible CO poisoning, unless you're sure it's not CO.
- Install and maintain marine grade approved CO detectors.
 - Every alarm requires immediate action.
 - Replace detectors as recommended by the manufacturer.
 - If CO is suspected, open all hatches, windows and ports to ventilate.
- Changing course and speed to place boat heading into the wind can improve ventilation.
- Maintain your engine in accordance with manufacturers recommendations. Engines that are not tuned properly produce more CO.
- Get a Vessel Safety Check.

The U.S. Coast Guard thanks the following partners for their support:

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

202-267-1001
www.cgaux.org

United States Power Squadrons®

888-FOR-USPS (888-367-8777)
www.usps.org

National Association of State Boating Law Administrators

859-225-9487
www.nasbla.org

National Safe Boating Council

703-361-4294
www.safeboatingcouncil.org

National Water Safety Congress

440-209-9805
www.watersafetycongress.org

For Further Information:

www.safeboatingcouncil.org
www.VesselSafetyCheck.org
U.S. Coast Guard Infoline
1-800-368-5647

www.uscgboating.org

For more information please contact:

