

OFFICE OF BOATING SAFETY, DEFINED ... CONTINUED

Editors Note: This is the second in the series of articles from the US Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety.

It is hoped that this general overview has been a helpful aid in better defining the operational programs within the Operations Policy (G-OP) Directorate. As a reminder to the reader, the four USCG basic goals are:

1. To improve the demonstrated knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors of boaters.
2. To improve the safety of boats and their associated equipment
3. To improve the physical and operational boating environment
4. To improve intermodal and interagency cooperation, coordination, and assistance.

The goals are supported by several major program elements which include: Education and Enforcement, improving Accident Reporting and data collection, National Outreach, emphasis on Lifejacket Wear, elimination of Boating Under the Influence, oversight of Personal Watercraft issues, enhanced Partnerships with key players and a commitment to Responsible Stewardship in the public interest. The last *AnchorLine* featured Education and Accident Reporting. This issue concludes with the remaining areas.

Outreach: The Coast Guard is committed to improving boater knowledge, skills and abilities, and the safety of boats through targeted awareness efforts. We have many ongoing initiatives in this area. The Office of Boating Safety's award winning web site, www.uscgboating.org, provides a dynamic source of information and material. In addition, the Coast Guard Infoline, 800-368-5647, provides another way to obtain information about boating safety and other Coast Guard programs.

The Coast Guard is an active partner in conducting the national annual boating safety campaign, "Boat Smart From The Start, Wear Your Lifejacket" with a significant outreach events held during National Safe Boating Week in May. We also coordinate with and have inserted boating safety awareness issues into other Department of Transportation national safety initiatives, such as, the Buckle Up campaign and National Drunk, Drugged and Driving Month. We successfully launched a national BUI awareness campaign *It's A Different World on the Water* to emphasize the danger of mixing drinking and boating, while Snoopy and the Peanuts characters continue reaching kids to get the boating safety message out at an early age.

To help find problems with boat construction, boaters are encouraged to report defects with their craft to the Office of Boating Safety. This can be done via our website, through the infoline, or via the Consumer Product Safety Commission website. From a preventive perspective we have an active manufacturers outreach program that targets new manufacturers for special awareness and education programs to help them deliver safety compliant boats the first time they build them.


This spring we will be launching a new industry awareness program to help educate all boat builders about federal and industry standards for construction. We continue to work to increase our inspection of boats after they are built and have an active floatation-testing program to ensure boats meet federal standards for impaired floatation.

Lifejackets or Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs): The emphasis must shift from just "having" PFDs onboard to always wearing them. Statistics show that 8 out of 10 people who died while boating were not wearing lifejackets. 519 boaters drowned in 2000 and 445 (85%) of those fatalities could have been avoided if people were wearing PFDs. What is most interesting is that over half of all fatalities result from people falling overboard or when boats capsize, not in collisions. Clearly, it doesn't take another craft to put people in peril. More importantly, our data from pwc accidents shows that wearing lifejackets does save lives.


Promotional campaigns work and do change behaviors, so we will continue to make this a key part of any outreach campaign. It is also very important to educate children as early as possible, but adults setting the example is a more proven way to educate children. The introduction of more comfortable inflatable lifejackets will make wearing them more acceptable and surely help save lives.

Alcohol Use and Boating Under the Influence: Due to the presence of many confounding factors, alcohol is as deadly if not more deadly in boating as it is in motor vehicles. Nationally a .10 Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) is the standard for intoxication and some states have lowered this further to .08 BAC. A Blood Alcohol Content of .08 is the standard in federally controlled areas, which includes our waterways.


Alcohol use in boating has a deadly effect. Alcohol involvement is reported in 31% of all known boating accidents with fatalities – up five (5) percent from the previous year. It is estimated that a boat operator with a blood alcohol content above .10 is 10 times more likely to be killed in a boating accident than are completely sober operators. *(article continued- page 4)*


 **2003 CAMPAIGN– NOTICE**
Anyone wishing to include their boating safety material in the 2003 Safe Boating Campaign: Please send samples to the NSBC office by **Oct. 20, 2002**. If your materials is selected, please be prepared to provide 80,000 – 100,000 copies of your material by **Dec. 20, 2002**.

 **SAFETY PIRATE SETS SAIL ON INTERNATIONAL WAVES**
Hear our very own Boating Safety Pirate in his recent Public Service Announcement on WMSL-UK, a station originating in the UK and airing internationally. Find the link on the "Partner" page of the NSBC website.

 **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**
To more efficiently process your annual membership renewal, we will mail your invoice in December. This action will not change your membership in any way.

 **EMAIL COMMUNICATION**
This fall, to aid in more efficient communications, NSBC is implementing an email communication system. NSBC will use **your** email address to keep you updated. Please make sure we have your correct email. If you prefer not to receive these email updates, please let us know. We request your attention in this matter to make this new communication process work effectively. Please make sure we have **your correct email address. Thank you.**

 **DON'T FORGET THE SIDEKICKS!!**
Our friendly gang of Boating Safety Sidekicks is waiting to join your event. Whether you're boating or fishing, our Sidekicks make learning about boating safety fun. Order your activity booklets today.

 **BREAKERS NEWS RELEASE**
Check out the happening at NSBC via Internet. Our latest new releases are available online www.safeboatingcouncil.org. Click the button labeled "Breakers".