

WAVES

Watercraft and Vessel Safety

The Newsletter from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Department of Boating

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The Incredible Yamaha Life Jacket Give Away!

Tom Mallison, DVC-BL

At the International Boating and Water Safety Summit (IBWSS) held in early May in Hollywood Beach, Florida, Yamaha Motor Corporation and the National Safe Boating Council combined efforts to offer Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) for boating safety programs for the cost of shipping and handling. The offer was disseminated throughout the Auxiliary and the response was overwhelming. Over 750 requests were received from Auxiliary Flotillas and Divisions throughout the country requesting PFDs for use in public education programs, boat shows, giveaways at safety booths and the like. There were over 600 other government and non-profit organizations at the IBWSS who also were extended this offer.

Shipments were made through the National Safe Boating Council in early July. Some shipments were made directly from Yamaha. Over 3,300 PFDs were shipped through the National Safe Boating Council. We would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Yamaha Motor Corporation and National Safe Boating Council for making these PFDs available for boating safety programs in support of the National Safe Boating Campaign "Wear Your Life jacket. Boat Smart from the Start." Many boaters will be touched by this remarkable contribution to boating safety through the programs in which these PFDs will be used.

National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) News

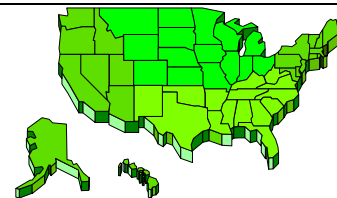
The National Association of Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) held their 39th Annual Conference in San Diego on 12 – 16 September 1998. At that conference they passed some very significant resolutions. Here are a few, in summary:

1. Supported the funding of Vessel Identification System (VIS). The USCG is mandated to establish a VIS that would provide a nationwide database of information on CG-documented and stated-registered vessels.
2. NASBLA rescinded its prior position against operator licensing. It now requests States requiring operator licensing to adopt the

NASBLA model act as the basis for the programs.

3. NASBLA supports State enacted mandatory education legislation based on the NASBLA model act.
4. Requests the CG to initiate a regulatory project to require third party certification of navigation lights to ensure they meet COLREGS Standards for recreational vessels.
5. Requests the CG to adopt the 17 digit Hull Identification Number (HIN) as the unique number for the VIS (See #1).
6. NASBLA recommends that any legislation enacted by States relative to speed and proximity be applicable to ALL vessels. NASBLA policy states that operation of a vessel in excess of headway speed when near another vessel, marked swim area or swimmer is dangerous and irresponsible behavior.
7. Support for fully inflatable PFDs with effective full system indication including cylinder seal indication.
8. Request the CG and Underwriters Laboratory to cooperatively develop test methodologies to evaluate a PFDs ability to stay on a wearer while operating at speeds of 50 MPH or greater. To this point, tests only measure the integrity and closures of a PFD, not its ability to remain on the wearer.

Recent Legislation of Interest to Recreational Boaters



The National Park Service proposes to prohibit Personal Watercraft in the majority of its parks, recreation areas and other waterways. The proposal will be published in the Federal Register and will have a 90-day comment period before a permanent rule is adopted in 1999. It will affect all of the 87 parks, lakeshores and seashores that allow motorized boating, except for nine areas that contain man-made lakes and four areas that have open ocean or bay waters.

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The State of **Alabama** requires every boater born after April 28, 1954 to pass a boater safety test or complete a certified boating safety course and obtain the license.

New York law requires that by January 2000 all Personal Watercraft operators under the age of 19 must take an eight-hour safety course. Mandatory education of older operators will be phased in over the next four years with instruction required for all operators by 2004.

North Carolina prohibits nighttime PWC operation and increases the minimum age to operate a PWC to 16, unless a person between 12 and 16 either has an adult on board or has successfully completed a boating safety course.

Beginning 1 January 2000, **Ohio** boaters born after 1 January 1982, will have to pass a boating safety course if they want to operate boats with more than 10 horsepower engines.

A new law in **Kentucky** prohibits anyone younger than 12 from operating personal watercraft or motorboats of more than 10 horsepower. Beginning January 1, 1999, those 12 to 17 may not operate watercraft unless they have a safe-boating certificate or are accompanied by someone who is at least 18 or someone who has a safe-boating certificate. Also, in the new law, PWC riders must wear life jackets, and when towing water-skiers, tubes or similar devices, must have an observer on board or rear-view mirrors.

Minnesota PWC operation has been limited to the hours between 9:30 am and one hour before sunset. Operators who are 13-17 years old must have watercraft operators permit and be within visual supervision of someone who is at least 21. The "No Wake" zone has been widened from 100 to 150 feet and PWCs must slow to a maximum of 5 MPH when traveling near non-motorized boats, shore launching areas, docks, rafts or anchored boats.

A new **Oregon** law requires children under the age of 12 to wear a life jacket when underway on powered or non-powered boats unless below decks on a larger boat.

No one under age 13 may operate a power vessel on **New Jersey** waters. Those between ages 13 and 15 may operate a boat powered by a motor of less than 1 horsepower or a 12-volt electric motor after completing an approved boating safety course. They may also operate a vessel 12 feet or longer with less than 10 HP only after completing a safety course. Anyone born on or after 1 January 1979 must complete an approved

safety course prior to operating any power vessel. Persons born earlier need not take a course unless they are operating a PWC. If one rents a PWC, s/he must sit through a brief safety course run by the rental company and remain within a restricted area.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

One of the primary activities of the Department of Boating is assisting Auxiliary Districts/Regions or Coast Guard Auxiliary National Board Inc. as they develop Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with various States and organizations. An MOU, with a State, is an agreement among the US Coast Guard, the USCG Auxiliary and the State. To date, an agreement with an outside organization, is formulated between the organization and Coast Guard Auxiliary National Board Inc. The content of these various agreements varies with the interests of the parties involved. The following items illustrate some of the areas covered in typical agreements.

- Use of the USCG Auxiliary to schedule and administer safe boating courses.
- Including the Auxiliary on planning of public affairs efforts such as National Safe Boating Campaign.
- USCG Auxiliary providing operational facilities, instructors and crew for State training programs in law enforcement and general boating safety.
- USCG Auxiliary proctoring examinations for court-assigned students
- Cooperative use of safety patrols, regatta patrols, search and rescue, on-shore vessel examinations, PFD loaner stations and disaster planning and emergency response activities.
- In the case of certain organizations (i.e., Boat/US, West Marine, Boater's World etc.), they are assisting the Auxiliary in promoting boating safety courses and, in some instances, providing certain types of discounts to students or members.

The Department of Boating is committed to expanding MOUs to all 50 States as well as other boating organizations.

USCG Auxiliary and the Web

If you haven't checked it out recently, sign on the Auxiliary site on the Web. It's at:

<http://www.cgaux.org>

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