



WAVES

Watercraft and Vessel Safety

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

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Here's a re-cap of State Educational Requirements. This information is gathered from many sources, including the Boat/US Web Page, Boatsafe.com web page and various state pages. As legislation is dynamic, this information needs to be verified prior to use.

State	Requirement
AL	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course, or an equivalency exam at a Division of Motor Vehicles office. The minimum age for certification is 12.
CO	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course. Minimum age for certification is 14.
CT	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course. There is no minimum age for certification. Anyone who has a Boating Safety Certificate may operate any boat (except personal watercraft PWC), except that someone under age 12 may operate a boat over 10 hp only with an 18 year old or older (who also must have a Boating Safety Certificate) aboard. In order to operate a personal watercraft (PWC), one must have a Personal Watercraft Operation Certificate. Anyone who has a Personal Watercraft Operation Certificate may operate a PWC. Someone under age 12 may operate a personal watercraft PWC provided s/he has a Personal Watercraft Operation Certificate and is accompanied by someone 18 years or older, who also has a PWC Operation Certificate, aboard the PWC. Boaters from another state who have a boating safety certificate must still take the Connecticut course to operate a PWC in Connecticut - there is no reciprocity.
DE	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course. No minimum age.
DC	Mandatory Education. Boaters may complete either non-proctored or proctored boating safety course.
FL	Mandatory Education -Boaters may complete either non-proctored or proctored boating safety courses for certification. All persons born on or after September 30, 1980 must complete a boating safety course.
GA	Mandatory Education. Boaters may complete either non-proctored or proctored boating safety course.
IL	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course. Minimum age for certification is 12.
IN	Mandatory Education. Boaters may complete either non-proctored or proctored boating safety course for certification. The minimum age for certification is 15. Upon completion of a boating safety course, persons 15 years of age must obtain a boater I.D. card from their local Bureau of Motor Vehicles before they may operate a vessel.
KY	Education becomes mandatory in the year 2000. All will be required to complete a proctored, boating safety course
ME	No mandatory educational requirements as of June 1999. Age Restriction: When operating a motorboat with more than 10 horsepower, a person under the age of 12 must be under the immediate supervision of a person located in the boat who is at least 16 years of age. A person under <u>16</u> years of age may not operate personal watercraft, which includes jet-skis. (Effective July 9, 1998, the legal age for operating personal watercraft has been changed from 12 years of age to 16 years of age).
MD	Mandatory Education. All persons born on or after July 1, 1972 must complete a proctored, boating safety course.
MA	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course
MI	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course

MN	No mandatory educational requirements for persons 18 and older. Those between 12 and 17 may operate PWC and/or boats with engines greater than 25hp only with a valid watercraft operator's permit. Permit is issued upon completion of the Minnesota DNR's home study course. No operator age restrictions on boats with engines 25hp or less.
MS	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course. Minimum age for certification is 12.
NJ	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course. Minimum age for certification is 13. No person under 13 years old may operate any power vessel on NJ waters. Those 13-15 years old may operate the following vessels after completing an approved boating safety course: A vessel powered by a motor of less than 1HP or a vessel powered by a 12-volt electric motor or a vessel 12 feet or greater in length powered by a motor, or combination of motors of less than 10 total HP. Those 16 years and older may operate any power vessel in accordance with the following: People born on or after January 1, 1979 must complete an approved boating safety course prior to operating any power vessel. Persons born on or before December 31, 1978 are not required to complete an approved boating safety course unless they are operating a PWC . When a person is required to complete an approved boating safety course prior to operating, they must carry proof of course completion with them.
NY	No mandatory educational requirements for anyone 18 years of age or older, to operate a vessel except a PWC . Those between the ages of 10 and 17 may operate a boat, with the exception of PWC without adult supervision if they successfully complete a proctored or non-proctored boating safety course. Upon completion of the course, the individual must carry the required safety certificate at all times, while operating the vessel. Education is mandatory for all PWC operators . New York State has enacted legislation requiring all PWC operators to complete a course in boating safety by January 1, 2004. PWC operators must complete a proctored boating safety course
ND	Mandatory Education. Boaters may complete either non-proctored or proctored boating safety course. The minimum age for certification is 12.
OH	Mandatory Education. Boaters may complete either non-proctored or proctored boating safety course. No minimum age for certification
PA	Mandatory Education for PWC operators ONLY . These persons must complete a proctored, boating safety course. The minimum age to be certified for PWC operation is 12; the minimum operator age for PWCs is 12
SC	Mandatory Education. Boaters may complete either non-proctored or proctored boating safety course. Not all non-proctored courses are accepted for certification
TX	Mandatory Education. Boaters may complete either non-proctored or proctored boating safety course. Not all non-proctored courses are accepted, for certification
UT	Mandatory Education for PWC operators between the ages of 12 and 17. PWC operators must complete the state's home/classroom study course for certification. Once certified: The operator must carry a copy of the course certification card at all times, while operating the PWC. Those 12-15 may operate the PWC if someone 18 years of age or older accompanies the individual aboard the PWC OR the individual age 12-15 may operate the PWC alone if and only if the individual operates the PWC within visual supervision of another individual, 18 or older . Children ages 16-17 may operate the PWC alone.
VT	Mandatory Education. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course
VA	Mandatory Education for PWC users under the age of 16. Those 14 and 15 may operate a PWC upon successful completion of a boating safety course. Upon completion, the 14 or 15 year old operator must carry proof of successful completion of the course at all times while operating the PWC. Course may be either non-proctored or proctored.
WV	Education becomes mandatory in 2000. No minimum age for certification. Course may be non-proctored or proctored.
WI	Mandatory Education. Minimum age for certification is 12. Boaters must complete a proctored, boating safety course
	No mandatory educational requirements as of June 1999: AK, AZ, AR, CA, HI, ID, IA, KS, LA, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NM, NC, OK, OR, RI, SD, TN, WA, WY

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