

National Safe Boating Campaign

NEWS

***Boat Smart.
Boat Safe.
Wear It!***

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

By Harriet Howard, SA-NSBW

It's a new year and the need to promote safe boating practices continues. In 2011, our public affairs officers, instructors and vessel examiners will have new opportunities to remind the boating public to take a boating safety class and to wear their life jacket when aboard.

Rear Admiral Kevin Cook, Director of Prevention Policy, U. S. Coast Guard, points out that the two most important things that boaters can do to prevent the loss of life is to wear a life jacket and to take a boater education course.



The most recent Coast Guard recreational boating statistics (2009), point up a critical need for boater education. The figures show that 2,656 recreational vessels were involved in boating accidents nationwide, resulting in 1,655 injuries and 326 deaths. The vessel operators involved in these accidents had never taken a boating safety class.

In 2011, the *Wear It!* campaign will continue, reminding boaters from coast to coast to put on their life jacket when on the water. The campaign is sponsored by the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the National Safe Boating Council and many other boating organizations. Looking ahead to the 2011 campaign, note that the National Safe Boating Council will offer its free materials starting March 1 on its www.safeboatingcampaign.com website. Paid resources are available year-round at the following link: <http://boatingorders.com/>

National Safe Boating Week, 2011, is May 21-27. Now is the time to start planning your activities. Plan to participate in Inflatable Life Jacket World Record Day, May 21. It's an opportunity for boaters everywhere to *Wear It!*