

National Safe Boating Campaign

NEWS

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

Partnering for Safe Boating

By Harriet Howard, DVC-AS

Our mascots, Myrna the MerMaid and Herman the MerMan are partners for safe boating. To all boaters, power or sail, their message is "Life jackets save lives!"

Echoing this sound advice, the National Safe Boating Council, partnering with the Coast Guard Auxiliary, state that "Safe and responsible boating starts with all boaters in a boat, wearing their life jackets at all times while on the water."

The Council produces a year-long North American Safe Boating Campaign under a grant from the Aquatic Resources (Wallop/Breau) Trust Fund, administered by the Coast Guard. Boating safety information and materials, with an emphasis on life jacket wear, are available for promotion through the media and with the boating public at www.safeboatingcampaign.com. Our Public Affairs and Publications Officers will find sample press releases, boating safety public service announcements, ordering forms for materials and much more, to assist them with the 2007 campaign. National Safe Boating Week, the highlight of the campaign, is May 19-25. Herman and Myrna remind us that NOW is the time to start planning.

The Coast Guard and its Auxiliary are partners in the safe boating campaign to save lives on the water. The Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety has introduced an electronic newsletter, Waypoints, to feature campaign information and updates. Visit their website at: www.uscgboating.org/waypoints.

Coast Guard statistics for 2005 show that **87%** of drowning victims were not wearing their life jackets. Also, 45% of the boats involved in reported accidents were open motorboats, 26% were personal watercraft and 14% were cabin motorboats. Myrna and Herman advise all boaters of any type of craft, to wear their life jackets and set a good example for other boaters.

For safety on the water, our nautical duo suggests that recreational boaters take a boating safety class, get a vessel safety check, boat sober and "Wear It!"

