

# Air Force Critical Days of Summer 2013

## Boatman

Sports and recreational activities account for the largest number of reported off-duty Class C injuries which resulted in lost duty time. Although basketball remains the sport resulting in the majority of injuries; summer activities bring risks in many other sports. This focuses on water sports: boating, swimming, jet skiing, etc. As in everything we do, the principles of risk management always apply and may be the key to saving a life.

The U.S. Coast Guard reports that boating fatalities jumped 12.8 percent in 2011 and are now at the highest level since 1998, according their report [http://www.uscgboating.org/assets/1/workflow\\_staging/Publications/557.PDF](http://www.uscgboating.org/assets/1/workflow_staging/Publications/557.PDF). *As in all water sports, much of the danger comes from drowning accidents. The top three factors are: lack of swimming ability, lack of barriers and lack of close supervision; all of which are manageable risks.*

**Listed below are resources for boating and other water activities:**

<http://www.uscgboating.org/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Water-Safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/drowningprevention/>

# Boating Safety Checklist

- ✓ Always insist that your child wears a life jacket approved by the U.S. Coast Guard and that it fits snugly so it can't slip off over the child's head. Never use "water wings" or other inflatable swimming aids as a substitute for a life jacket.
- Always wear a life jacket to set a good example for your kids.
- Never drink alcoholic beverages while boating.



Set a good example and wear a life jacket.

- Complete a boating safety course.
- Get your boat inspected for safety once a year, for free, by the Coast Guard Auxiliary or U.S. Power Squadrons ([www.uscgboating.org](http://www.uscgboating.org)).
- Make sure there's a working carbon monoxide detector on any motorboat to alert your family to any buildup of toxic fumes from the engine.
- When a vessel is underway with children under 13 years old, they must be wearing a life jacket unless they are below deck or in an enclosed cabin. On some state waters this age requirement may vary. Boaters are encouraged to check with their respective state boating authority regarding these requirements.

# Oceans, Lakes and Rivers Safety Checklist

- ✓ Make sure your kids swim only in areas designated for swimming.
- Don't let your kids dive into natural bodies of water — only swimming pools where the water is at least nine feet deep.
- Teach your kids the differences between open water and a swimming pool. Open water can have currents, undertow and hidden hazards under the surface.
- Don't let your kids operate personal watercraft such as jet skis. These are intended for adults and require special training.
- Make sure kids wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket any time when in or near open bodies of water or participating in water sports.



Obey posted warnings.

# Water Safety Checklist

- ✓ Always keep your eyes on and stay close to your kids when they're in or near a body of water. If you can't give them your undivided attention, make sure there is another designated adult "water watcher," taking turns with other responsible adults.
- Keep a phone handy in case of emergency when your kids are near water.



Sign your kids up for swimming lessons.

- Sign your kids up for swimming lessons when they were old enough (at least 4) and make sure a certified instructor teaches them how to tread water, float and swim out of a cross-current (rip tide). But remember, swimming lessons do not make a child "drownproof."
- Learn infant and child CPR.

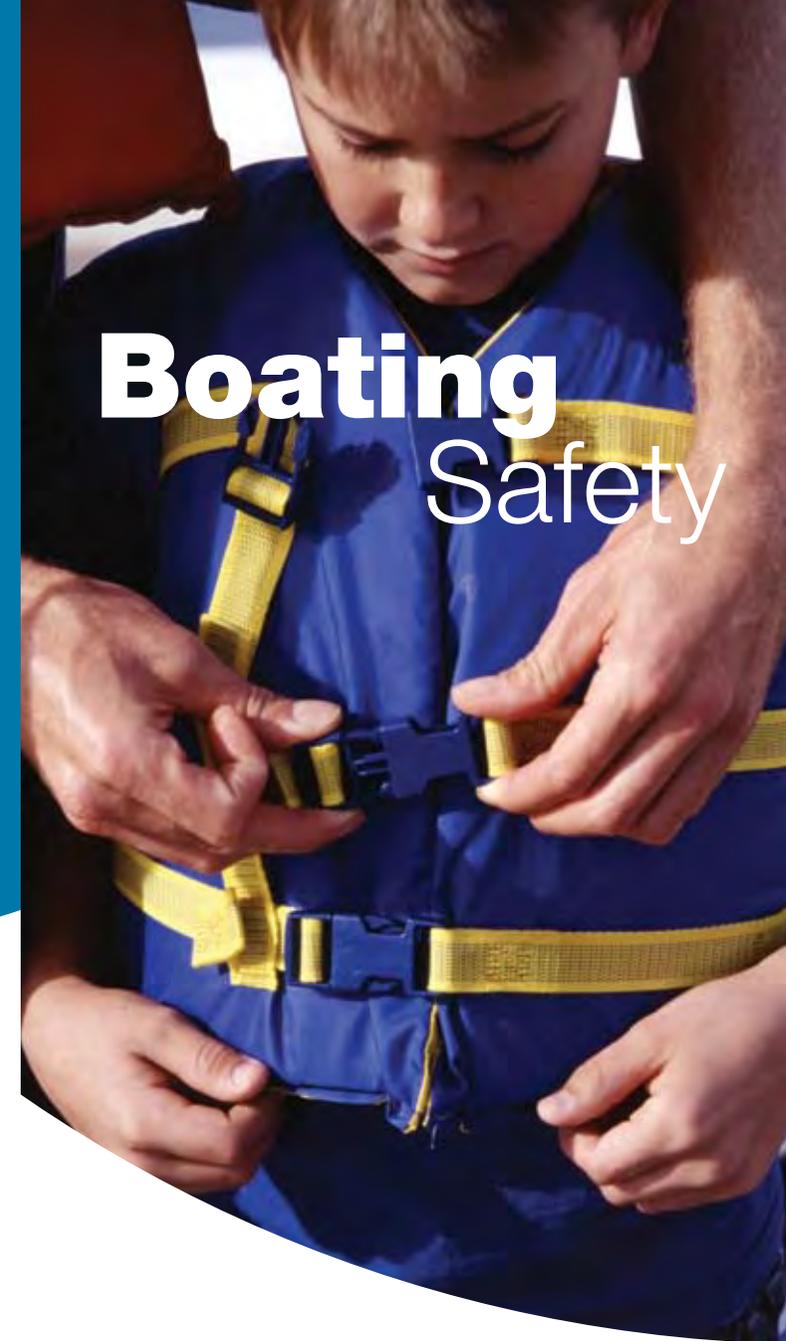
# Remember:

There are things you can do to keep your child safe. Please use this booklet to help you remember what to do.

- Everyone on a boat needs to wear a properly fitted life jacket at all times. Inflatable swimming aids do not prevent drowning — wear a life jacket approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Kids should only swim under the supervision of an adult paying undivided attention. Keep a phone and rescue equipment handy.
- Parents and caregivers should learn CPR, but should not enter the water to rescue swimmers unless specifically trained in water rescue.



For more information, contact  
Safe Kids Worldwide  
202-662-0600  
[www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org)



# Boating Safety

Safe Kids Worldwide  
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20004



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from the  
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(Wallop-Breaux) Trust Fund  
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## Water Safety

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In 2010, drowning claimed the lives of 3,600 people. Although all age groups are represented, children four years old and younger have the highest death rate due to drowning, representing more than 14 percent. Most drowning and near-drowning incidents happen when a child falls into a pool or is left alone in the bathtub.

### Safety Tips

- Never leave a child alone near water: on the beach, at a pool or in the bathtub. If you must leave, take your child with you.
- Kids don't drown only in pools. Bathtubs, buckets, toilets and hot tubs present drowning dangers as well.
- Enroll children older than age three in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors. But keep in mind that lessons don't make your child "drown-proof."
- Always follow posted safety precautions when visiting water parks.
- If you're visiting a public pool, keep an eye on your kids. Lifeguards aren't babysitters.
- Teach your children these four key swimming rules:
  - Always swim with a buddy
  - Don't dive into unknown bodies of water – jump feet first to avoid hitting your head on a shallow bottom
  - Don't push or jump on others
  - Be prepared for an emergency
- Never consume alcohol when operating a boat.
- Always use approved personal flotation devices (life jackets).
- Don't underestimate the power of water. Even rivers and lakes can have undertows.
- Always have a first-aid kit and emergency phone contacts handy. Parents should be trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

*Information and recommendations are compiled from sources believed to be reliable. The National Safety Council makes no guarantee as to and assumes no responsibility for the correctness, sufficiency or completeness of such information or recommendations. Other or additional safety measures may be required under particular circumstances. Last Revised: 09/12*

Before pulling the towed device or skier to speed, check the path ahead for obstacles and make sure the towline is not caught in the propeller or wrapped around the person you're towing. The boat operator should never accelerate until the person being towed is holding the towline handle, is appropriately positioned and signals, "hit it."

Never attempt sharp turns with the boat, especially if the person being towed is cutting sharply outside the wake on either side. If approaching danger forces you into an unexpected turn, throttle back as you turn. Signal the turn to the person being towed, remembering that it is better to dunk him or her than risk an accident.

As a boat operator, you must always maintain a proper lookout. Be a courteous driver, staying clear of anglers, swimmers and other vessels. Don't pull a towed device directly in front of another boat. Towing a person doesn't give you special privileges. The rules of the road must be observed.

The boat operator should judge the speed according to the ability of the skier or the limitation of the towed device. A good speed for beginners, depending on weight and ski size, is 18-25 mph. Tubes are generally designed for slower speeds. Tow boats must follow all speed limits.

Never back the boat up to a person in the water. Remember, when boat engines idle, even while in neutral, the propeller may still turn and cause injury.



## Safety Equipment

Although persons over 12 are not required to wear a Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD), the Marine Board

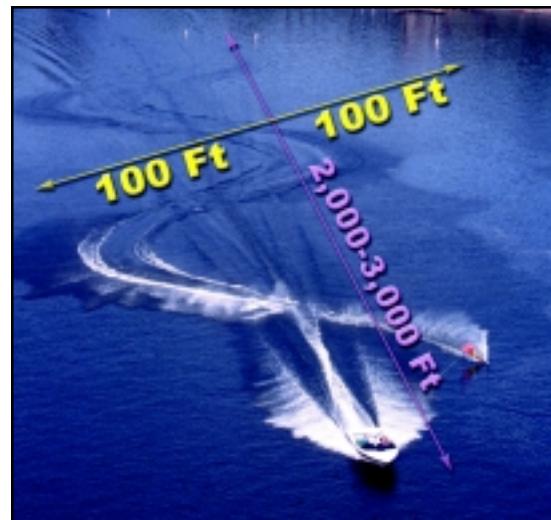
strongly recommends that all persons being towed, whether skiing, tubing or boarding, wear one. All children 12 and younger must wear a PFD. If the person being towed does not wear a PFD, then the person must have one on board the towboat. There must also be an international orange or red "skier down" flag on board.

Make sure your equipment is in safe condition. Foot or knee bindings should be free of sharp or protruding surfaces and made secure by tightening the hardware. Skis or knee boards should be free of splinters and/or cracks in lamination. Tubes should be properly inflated and attached to the tow rope as per manufacturers instructions. Tubes should generally be operated at a slower speed than other devices (15 - 20 mph). Remember, also, that tubes have no directional control - be wary of in-water hazards.

A moving towline can cut like a knife. For this reason, towlines should be of equal length when more than one person is skiing.

## Where To Ski

The majority of water sport accidents involve collisions with other boats, other skiers or fixed objects. Minimize this danger by staying out of



congested areas. Avoid towing close to shore, around bends or in shallow water. Stay out of fishing areas and away from docks. It is best to "scout" your area before you play.

Ski where your boat can maintain at least a 200-foot wide corridor (100 feet on each side of the boat). Generally, a length of 2000 to 3000 feet is desirable. Depth should be at least 5 to 6 feet of obstacle-free water.

## Water Ski Courses

A state permit is required to install a water ski course, ski jump, slalom course, whitewater race gates or other special use devices on Oregon waters. Permits are issued following a limited public interest review of the proposed course or devices. Call or check the Marine Board's web site for information and application forms.

For more information, contact the Marine Board as noted below.

*The Marine Board would like to thank the Portland Water Spectacular Team and Mastercraft Boats & Service, Inc. for their assistance with this publication.*

## Oregon State Marine Board

PO Box 14145, Salem, OR 97309

Phone: (503) 378-8587

Fax: (503) 378-4597

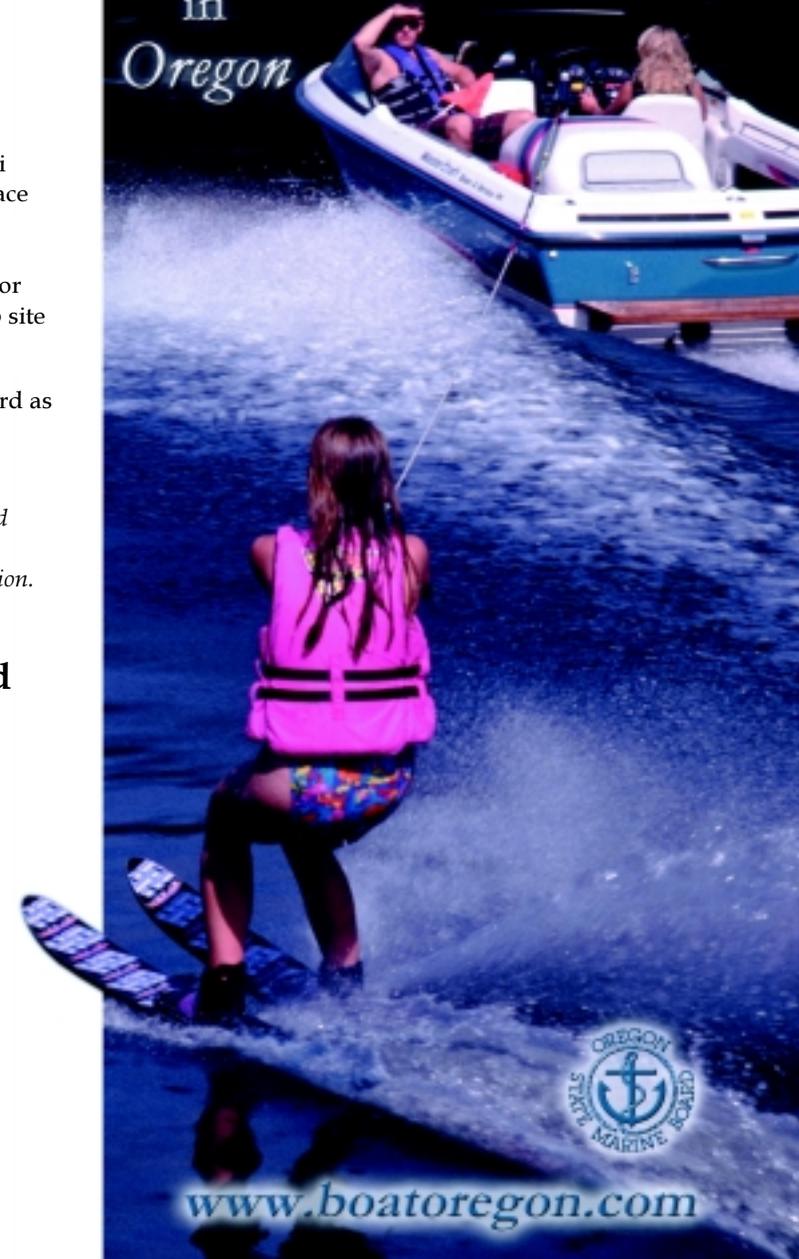
[www.boatoregon.com](http://www.boatoregon.com)



Learn more about Oregon's Mandatory Boater Education Program at [www.boatoregon.com](http://www.boatoregon.com) or call (503) 373-1405 x273.

250-434-5/01

# Skiing, Tubing & Boarding in Oregon



[www.boatoregon.com](http://www.boatoregon.com)



The law requires:

- An observer is mandatory while towing a person on any device.
- Use of a red or international orange “skier down” flag is required
- Towing water sports are only allowed from sunrise to sunset

## The Observer

In Oregon, an observer is required to be on board the towboat. The observer, skier and operator should act as a team. The observer must be able to read the skier’s signals and communicate them to the operator. The observer must also be ready to rescue the skier. A “skier down” flag must be raised whenever a skier is in the water, to alert other boaters.

The observer’s responsibility is to keep the operator aware of:

- Skier’s signals
- Skier’s position
- Location of a fallen skier or equipment
- Other boats in the area, especially behind the skier

If a skier falls and is injured, proceed with caution. Pulling the person aboard may aggravate the injury. Get into the water to support the skier until the nature of the injury is known.

## The Skier

Be alert for partially submerged objects, swimmers, rafters or anything else that might come between you and the boat. Wear a Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device designed for these types of water sports at all times. It will allow you to rest in the water while waiting for the boat, it protects the rib cage, cushions falls and its bright color will help others spot you.

## Watersport Safety

Many Oregonians are involved in water sports accidents every year. Whether skiing, tubing or wakeboarding, the difference between a safe, enjoyable outing and a tragic mishap lies in common sense and a respect for safety.

Before the person being towed ever yells “hit it,” they should be acquainted with their equipment, the rules of the road and the fundamentals of the sport.

It is against the law to operate a boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs in Oregon. Water sports require good reflexes and alertness. Several hours of exposure to noise, vibration, sun, glare, wind and motion will fatigue a skier and operator, slowing down reaction time. Adding alcohol to these boating stress factors intensifies their effects, multiplying the accident risk.

## Oregon’s Skiing Laws

Oregon’s water skiing laws pertain to all towed devices, including knee boards, hydrofoils, tubes and similar devices. The laws are designed to make water sports safer for us all. Used here, the word “skier” generally refers to all towed devices.

## Towing Signals

The following signals, approved by the *American Water Ski Association*, are recommended on Oregon waters.



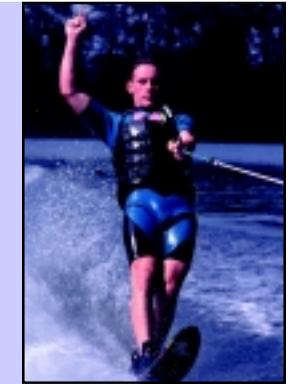
*Faster*



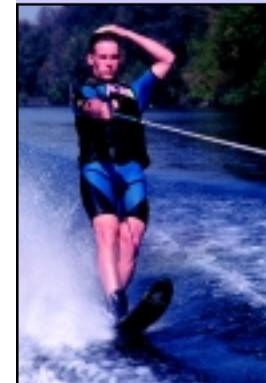
*Slower*



*Speed Okay*



*Turn/Turn Around*



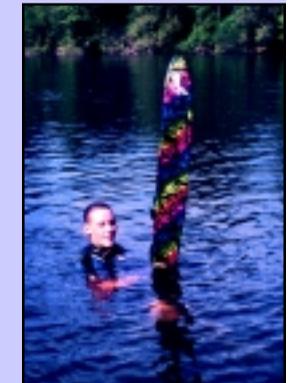
*Home/Back to Dock*



*Stop/Cut Motor*



*Skier Okay After Fall*



*Fallen Skier/Pick Up*

Water sports in cold environments increases the risk of hypothermia. Special precautions, such as wearing a wetsuit or drysuit, should be taken.

If you are going to fall, relax! Try to make a smooth water entry. Avoid falling over the top of your skis, knee board or tube. In heavy boat traffic, hold up a ski or knee board after falling to show your location. Stop your activity before you become exhausted – exhaustion invites tragedy.

## The Boat Operator

Oregon’s Mandatory Boater Education Program will begin phasing in in 2003, eventually requiring all people operating powerboats greater than 10 horsepower to complete a boating education course or equivalency exam. Make sure your operator is both safe and legal. Contact the Marine Board to learn more.