

Smart Harbors

Raising the Standard

Summer 2023

Why become a Virginia Clean Boater?

By adopting pollution prevention measures, Virginia Clean Boaters can take satisfaction in knowing they are doing their part to:

- Keep Virginia waterways clean.
- Preserve our waterways for the future.
- Learn and teach clean boating habits.



Please Send Us Your News!

Do you have a new and exciting method for managing recyclables at your facility? Are there any regulatory items that you would like addressed? Has your facility won an award, hired a new manager or purchased a fancy pump-out boat?

If you have any news that you would like included in the Clean Marina Newsletter, *Smart Harbors*, please let us know. This is a quarterly newsletter with the next issue scheduled for Fall 2023 and we would like to include information from the marina community.

Comments or questions please email VCMC: askVCMC@vims.edu or call 804-684-7768.



Don't Hit the Water This Summer Without a No-Cost, No-Penalty Vessel Safety Check

Top 3 reasons why boats fail

SPRINGFIELD, Va., April 4, 2023 – How do you know your boat is ready for a safe summer boating season and complies with new U.S. Coast Guard regulations? A no-cost, no-penalty vessel safety check from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and U.S. Power Squadrons/America's Boating Club can help. Scheduled inspections are often offered at launch ramps, marinas and boat clubs, or appointments can be made for a vessel examiner to come to your boat. Go to cgaux.org/vsc to learn more. The program is sponsored by the [BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water](http://BoatUS.org).

Upon successful completion of the exam, which typically takes less than 30 minutes, the vessel is awarded a U.S. Coast Guard / Auxiliary / U.S.

Power Squadrons decal that informs law enforcement and safety agencies that your boat was in full compliance with all federal and state boating laws during a safety check for that year.

So just what items do vessels typically fail on this important early season inspection? According to the U.S. Power Squadrons/America's Boating Club, the top three reasons are:

1. Navigation lights -19%
2. [Fire extinguishers](#) -18%
3. Distress signals -16%

"The numbers tell us a vessel safety check can help owners of every type of boat," said BoatUS Foundation assistant director of boating safety Ted Sensenbrenner. "Nearly as many 'open' type vessels (44%) fail vessel safety checks as much as those

with enclosed cabins (47%). A vessel safety check on either type can help a bad day get a lot better, or potentially save a life."

Boat clubs, marinas, boat yards and municipalities with launch ramps are also encouraged to reach out to their [local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary](#) or [U.S. Power Squadrons/America's Boating Club](#) to schedule a vessel safety check day at their property.



A no-penalty vessel safety check from U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and U.S. Power Squadrons/America's Boating Club can improve on water safety this summer boating season. Photo credits: U.S. Power Squadrons

Boaters: Are You Ready for Arlene, Bret, Cindy, Don and Emily?

2023 Atlantic hurricane season began June 1; here are time-tested preparation tips from the experts at BoatUS

SPRINGFIELD, Va.,— Arlene, Bret, Cindy, Don and Emily are the first five names NOAA deployed for storms this Atlantic hurricane season that began June 1 and runs through November 30. However, with [researchers from Colorado State University predicting 13 named](#)



Hurricane planning ensures you have all the right supplies and gear for the boat before a storm approaches. Photo credits: BoatUS.

[storms](#) – six officially hurricanes with winds of 74 mph or greater – boaters in storm-affected parts of the country may be meeting Margot, too.

The [BoatUS Hurricane Center](#) from Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS) offers



free hurricane preparation information including downloadable guides and worksheets to help recreational boaters get ready for storm season now. Also offered is an extensive library of [hurricane-preparation videos](#) and BoatUS Magazine articles containing proven tips and techniques amassed from the nearly four decades of post-storm recreational vessel recovery, salvage and wreck-removal experience from the nation's largest advocacy, services and safety group for boaters.

To help boat owners know when to implement their hurricane plan, they can also download the [BoatUS App](#) that has an Active Storm Tracker providing updates on direction and intensity of incoming storms and text alerts.

Thinking of Donating Your Boat This Year?

Here's why doing it now can be a better deal for you

ANNAPOLIS, Md., May 25, 2023 – Thinking of donating your boat? If you're looking to get a break on next year's tax bill by donating your boat this year, you may not want to wait too long. That's because the Internal Revenue Service bases the value of the charitable deduction on the actual selling price of the donated boat. Selling now, in the peak season of demand, could potentially mean a greater benefit for the former boat owner.

"Donating your boat now aligns a charity's interests with your own – they get the most value from the donation to run programs or operations, and more you stand to gain in tax benefits in the form of a tax deduction," said BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water Boat Donation Program manager Ted Sensenbrenner. "More boats are sold now than at any time of year. If you wait to donate in late fall, it is less of

a seller's market. Additionally, if the boat doesn't get sold until 2024, you delay any potential tax benefit."

The [BoatUS Foundation's Boat Donation Program](#), unlike other charities that accept boats, may offer additional benefits to those looking to donate as it actively uses some donated boats for training purposes. In some cases, donated vessels – typically single engine center-console types – are needed for Foundation On-Water Training programs. With these boats, the donor may use the surveyed value at the time of donation for tax purposes, and the write-off may be taken immediately.

For boats donated but to be sold, the Foundation's program uses a partner broker to advertise the boat to help realize its highest value. The nonprofit also ensures that the donation process is hassle-free, from picking up the boat to handling the paperwork.



This BoatUS member from Maryland donated his 2002, 32-foot powerboat to the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water. Photo credit: USBoat

If you have a boat in good or better condition that you are considering to donate, go to [BoatUS.org/Donate/Boat-Donation](#). Also available are helpful IRS links, including the IRS brochure "A Donor's Guide to Vehicle Donation," IRS Publication 526 "Charitable Donations," and IRS rules for determining maximum deductions for charitable contributions. Always consult a tax professional regarding boat donations.

BoatUS Foundation: 5 Ways to Be Seen and Heard When You Really Need to Summon Help

ANNAPOLIS, Md., May 15, 2023— When you have an emergency on the water, how do you get help? For National Safe Boating Week, May 21-27, the nonprofit [BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water](#) reminded boaters that having the ability to be seen and heard is critically important.

Here are five ways boaters can prepare for a safe summer on the water and, if necessary, summon rescuers to your location.

≈ **1. VHF Radio** – A VHF (Very High Frequency) radio is the most reliable way to communicate with other boats and emergency responders on most waterways. New Digital Selective Calling (DSC) radios with a red distress button can even send an emergency call and other important information such as your location to authorities automatically when [properly installed and registered](#).

≈ **2. Emergency Beacon** – An emergency beacon, such as an EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) or PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) can be activated

to send a distress signal to satellites and rescue authorities. These devices are designed to work in remote areas where cellphone coverage is not available. EPIRBs and PLBs [can be rented from the BoatUS Foundation](#).

≈ **3. Sound-Producing Device** – A sound producing device, such as an installed horn, a handheld air horn, and even a whistle, can be used to signal for help. Five or more blasts from a horn or a whistle indicate danger or a dangerous situation is unfolding. Sound-producing devices are required by law on most boats and can be heard over a considerable distance.

≈ **4. Visual Distress Signals** – Visual Distress Signals (VDS) such as pyrotechnic flares and certain battery-operated SOS light beacons can be used to signal for help when you're out on the water. Flares and Coast Guard-approved distress lights can be seen from several miles away and are an effective way to signal for help when other methods of communication are not available.

≈ **5. Distress Flag** – A distress flag is an orange flag with a black square and a black circle. If you're in distress, you can hoist the flag to signal other boats that you need assistance. This is a good alternative for use on small, wet watercraft, like kayaks and personal watercraft where traditional flares could get wet or storage aboard is a challenge.



Visual distress signals can be very effective for summoning help from those assets closest to your location – fellow boaters – potentially shortening response time. Photo credit: US Boat

MARINA NEWS: Deltaville Yachting Center - Middlesex Green Up

In April and May 2023 Middlesex County, Va. kicked off 'Middlesex Green Up' - Keep Our County Beautiful to encourage a volunteer effort for litter clean up. Deltaville Yachting Center was proud to be a host center where volunteers could pick up their Middlesex Green Up kits and submit the litter data. As Middlesex County's first Virginia Clean Marina, the NYC team is focused on environmental efforts to keep the waterway, marina and boatyard tuned in to best practices. Marinas play a big part in community environmental awareness.



Photos by: Onna A. Grimm Owner/ Manager, Deltaville Yachting Center & Chesapeake Yacht Sales.



Top Tips for Wearing Your Engine Cutoff Switch Lanyard

BoatUS Foundation offers safe & comfortable options for regulation compliance

ANNAPOLIS, Md., March 22, 2022 – The summer of 2021 was the first full season boaters were required to use an engine cutoff switch as a result of a [new law that went into effect on April 1, 2021](#). The law mandates the use of either a helm or outboard lanyard or wireless engine cutoff switch (ECOS) on certain vessels less than 26 feet when traveling on plane or above displacement speed.

What have boaters learned while complying with the new law?

“There are no rules for how or where to attach an ECOS lanyard to your body,” said [BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water](#) Assistant Director of Boating Safety Ted Sensenbrenner. “But there are some things to think about that will help you wear it when you need.” The boating nonprofit offers top tips for wearing your ECOS lanyard:

1. There are four common locations on the captain’s body to attach an ECOS lanyard. If one doesn’t work for your kind of boating, try another. Wrist-worn lanyards that have a quick-adjust hook-and-loop strap are commonly used on personal watercraft and may also work well at the helm of a powerboat. Life jackets often have a plastic ring to connect a lanyard clip, while pant belt loops are also convenient, and since that location is lower on the body, it may be less prone to snagging. Some boaters prefer attaching it even lower and secure the ECOS lanyard around a thigh or ankle. Just use caution to not overstretch the lanyard.
2. According to the American Boat & Yacht Council, typical ECOS lanyards are 48 to 72 inches when fully extended. It’s OK to adjust the lanyard length based on boat configuration and operator location. “It’s a balance in finding freedom of movement and ensuring it won’t wrap around something or get snagged,” said Sensenbrenner.
3. Some ECOS devices eliminate the lanyard and rely on wireless

proximity devices to shut down an engine if the operator goes overboard. While these wireless ECOS, typically worn as a bracelet or fob, cost more and require more care, they may be the easiest to wear for some boaters. Fobs can also be attached to a lanyard and worn around the neck, placed in a pocket or clipped to a belt or life jacket.

4. A lanyard clip that you can use with one hand also makes ECOS wearing easier.
5. No matter which kind of ECOS used, boaters need to learn how to bypass, rearm or reset an ECOS quickly in the event of an activation. Read the manual and practice at the dock.
6. When you welcome guests and crew aboard, tell them how the ECOS works and the potential hazard created by ECOS activation and rapid deceleration.



Having everyone keep clear of the lanyard is, as Martha Stewart says, “a good thing.”

7. Even the simplest ECOS need some care. A faded lanyard may not be a reason to replace, but it is a reason to take a closer look. Plastic lanyard clips can become brittle, metal clips can corrode and the lanyard line can lose elasticity. These items are inexpensive to replace – and it’s good practice to keep a spare aboard in case the captain goes overboard and the crew needs to facilitate a swift and safe retrieval. Be sure to let your crew know where the spare is located in your pre-trip briefing.

CleanWay™ Fuel Fill Kits

In early Spring 2022, VCMP representatives began distributing CleanWay™ devices to each certified Virginia Clean Marina (one device for each standard fuel port size). Full color laminated instructions will be provided, and a brief training will be conducted with marina operators and staff. Operators can then instruct their clients in the proper use of the units when refueling. Funding for this project was secured through the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund and sales of the “Friend of the Chesapeake” license plate. For more information about the CleanWay™ fuel fill kits, please email askVCMP@vims.edu.



This simple, innovative, and reusable device allows

boaters to refuel quickly and efficiently without overflow or spillage. CleanWay™’s unique design allows air to escape throughout the refueling process and automatically redirects any splashed fuel down into the tank. By preventing spills before they happen, regular use of these baffles helps keep fuel, dispersants, and debris out of the marine environment and flammable absorbent materials out of the landfill.



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