



The Safety Corner

From the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned 22 May 2007



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Critical Days of Summer: Part 1 of 6

This issue of the Safety Corner is the first in a series highlighting safety tips for the 101 Critical Days of Summer Campaign. The focus of this issue is boating safety. Upcoming issues will address grilling, swimming, and running safety tips.

From the Director: As summer approaches, we will once again be gathering with family and friends to enjoy picnics, barbecues, and water activities. Unfortunately, the 101 Critical Days of summer has historically shown a marked increase in the number of fatalities. The period between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day, this year from 26 May thru 4 Sep has been so designated, due to the sharp increase in injuries and fatalities often sustained by Marine and Sailors resulting from off-duty activities.

Summer is a great time to be outdoors, go boating, swimming, hiking, or fishing, or just throwing a few steaks on the grill. Unfortunately, off-duty mishaps continue to claim more Marines and Sailors lives than any other period during the year. According to the Naval Safety Center, most fatal traffic accidents occur on summer weekends and/or at night, with speed, fatigue and inattentiveness contributing to the majority of them.

Remember, summer is a time for travel and outdoor fun, not for taking unnecessary risks while off-duty. Let's make this a record breaking safe summer, with even fewer fatalities than 2006 (see the graphics on the next page). Whether you are planning a weekend trip or staying at home, we need all Marine and Sailors to be safe and think before they act. Every Marine and Sailor's goal should be to prevent the needless injuries and fatalities of past summers. Safety is everyone's responsibility and we must incorporate it into our daily activities. Every Marine, Sailor, and family member must be committed to avoiding mishaps. Have a happy and safe summer, and throw a steak on the grill for me.

Log on the www.mccll.usmc.mil to download previous editions of the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned Safety Corner as well as our Monthly Newsletters.

I look forward to your comments, observations, and concerns.

Semper Fidelis,
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Reducing Mishaps by 75%

The FY06 SECDEF mishap reduction initiative challenge Marine Corps commands to reduce mishaps by 75% by the end of FY08 (using FY02 data as baseline)

Use the Naval Safety Center's website to glean best practice ideas to enhance your command Critical Days of Summer safety awareness program. Engage the services of the local community in providing speakers for stand-downs such as the US Coast Guard, state and local police, medical personnel, etc. <http://safetycenter.navy.mil/>

2003-2005 Boating Fatality Rate

YEAR	FATALITIES	INJURIES	ACCIDENTS	NUMBER OF REGISTERED	NUMBER OF FATALITIES BOATS REGISTERED PER 100,000
2003	703	3,888	5,438	12,794,616	5.5
2004	676	3,363	4,904	12,781,476	5.3
2005	697	3,451	4,969	12,942,414	5.4

The observations and recommendations contained in The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) Safety Corner represent the considered judgment of Marines who have identified safety issues in their units. The purpose of this newsletter is to apprise other Marines of these safety recommendations and to encourage them to enter their own lessons into the Marine Corps Lessons Management System (LMS).



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2003-2005 Top Five Causes of Boating Accidents

ACCIDENT RANK	ACCIDENT TYPE	NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS	NUMBER OF FATALITIES
1	COLLISION WITH VESSEL	1,378	79
2	FALLS OVERBOARD	498	213
3	COLLISION WITH FIXED OBJECT	497	41
4	SKIER MISHAP	464	10
5	CAPSIZING	442	199

Did you know that waterways are second to only highways when it comes to accidental deaths, and that alcohol is a major contributing factor in recreational boating casualties?

Boating Tips

Learn to swim. Sooner or later, you're going in, and you don't want to have to rely on a life preserver or a passenger.

Take a safe boating course. The local MWR department can provide the information necessary to enroll.

Do a pre-season inspection of your boat, motor, and safety accessories and check them each time you go out.

Install a dead-man ignition switch on your motor.

Abide by the manufacturer's load capacity plate on the boat. It lists limits for people, motor and gear. Don't overload.

Make sure the required safety equipment is onboard. Personal flotation devices, fire extinguisher, whistle, horn, and flares.

Remember, boats 16 feet and longer are required to carry three daytime and three nighttime visual distress devices.

A VHF radio is recommended as well as an anchor and line.

Always leave a float plan with a friend or marina operator. Indicate where you are going, departure time, boat name, registration number, and what time to notify the Coast Guard if you have not returned.

Check weather conditions. Immediately return home if the weather turns sour. Don't wait for the waves to come over the bow. If you see or hear a storm, get back to land.

Ensure everyone wears an approved Coast Guard personal flotation device. This practice is highly recommended for all boats. Boats 16 feet and longer are required to be equipped with one Type I, II, III, or V (wearable) device for each person aboard plus one Type IV (cushion or life ring). Boats less than 16 feet in length are required to carry one Type I, II, III, IV or V for each person aboard. For additional information see OPNAVINST 5100.25A and MCO 5100.30A

Discourage alcohol use. Most states have stiff penalties, similar to those imposed on motor vehicles operators, for operating a boat while intoxicated.

When passing marinas, fishing areas, or swimming areas, reduce speed to prevent wakes.

Keep learning about boats and the water.

Groups (including the U.S. Power Squadron and the Coast Guard Auxiliary) teach classes in navigation, weather and emergency procedures.

Check the forecast and watch the weather while you're underway.

SOURCE: U.S. Coast Guard



LIFE JACKETS

TYPE 1: This jacket floats the best. It is designed to turn most people who are unconscious in the water from the face-down position to an upright and slightly backward position. It is available in 2 sizes: 1 size for adults more than 90 pounds and 1 size for children less than 90 pounds.

TYPE 2: This jacket can turn a person upright and slightly backwards but not as much as the Type 1 jacket. It may not always help an unconscious person to float face up. It is comfortable and comes in many sizes for children.

TYPE 3: This jacket is designed for conscious users in calm, inland water. It is very comfortable and comes in many styles. This life jacket is often used for water sports and should be used only when it is expected that the rescue can be done quickly.

LIFE PRESERVERS

TYPE 4: A life preserver is a cushion or ring and is not worn. It is designed to be used in two ways. It can be grasped and held until the person is rescued, or it can be thrown to someone in the water until he or she is rescued. It is not a toy and should only be used in a rescue situation. Check the label on the life preserver to be sure it meets US Coast Guard or state regulations.

ALWAYS REMEMBER THESE TIPS: Children should wear life jackets at all times. Teach your child how to put on his or her own life jacket. Make sure the life jacket is the right size for your child, and adults should wear life jackets for their own protection and to set a good example.



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Water-Skiing — the Safe Way is the Only way

While boating and water-skiing are mostly about fun, they are also about safety. We frequently see news stories about an accident or foolish act that caused someone to be injured or die while boating or water-skiing. Often, the accidents and foolish acts stem from bad safety decisions.

Seven water-skiing safety tips

1. Use United States Coast Guard approved (USCGA) flotation devices. The U.S. Coast Guard regulations require any child under 13 years of age to wear a Protective Floatation Device (PFD). Skiers should also wear them at all times while in the water.
2. Know your surroundings before you start skiing.
3. Always have a lookout in the boat. You don't want to look back from driving the boat to see how your buddy is skiing and find him or her nowhere to be seen.
4. Use skis that are right for you. If you are not a pro-skier, don't use a pro-skier ski.
5. Establish good hand signals with the boat crew. Skiers often try to communicate by yelling instructions to the boat, but they can't be heard because of the wind and engine noise.
6. When a skier stops or falls, the boat should always approach the skier from the right side so that the driver always has sight of the skier in the water.
7. The golden rule of all rules, **Do not drink and boat**. It's very dangerous when you add alcohol to the mix, and it's against the law.

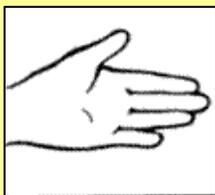


To learn more about water-skiing log on to www.usa.waterski.org Source: Foremost Insurance Company

Water Skiing Hand Signals



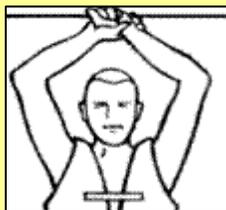
Use hand signals between the skier and observer. Agree before you start what each signal means so there is no confusion at a critical moment.



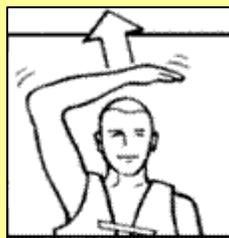
Turn Left



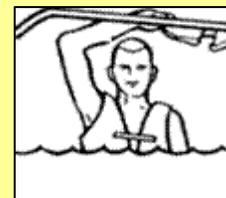
Turn Right



OK



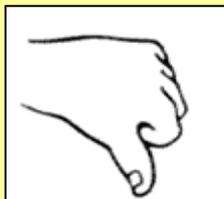
Back to Dock



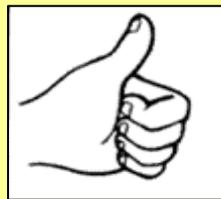
Retrieval



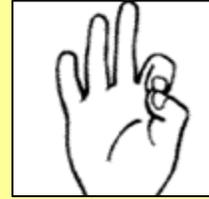
Stop



Slower



Faster



Speed OK



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Jet Ski (Personal Water Craft) Safety Tips:

Jet skiing may be fun, but just like any other motor vehicle on water, it can impose great danger if used improperly. Here's a few safety tip to assure that you will have fun while eliminating the possible danger.

1. Learn how to operate the jet ski before hopping on.
2. Wear life preservers, the Law requires anyone who uses jet ski to wear life jackets. It doesn't matter if you know how to swim or not, if you are going to drive or ride a jet ski, you must wear life jacket. Other than life jacket, the following PPE should be worn, gloves, goggles, and a wet suit.
3. Never ride close to another watercraft, most accidents are caused by collisions, so stay at least 100 feet away from another watercraft, divers, rafts, and swimmers.
4. Know the rules with regards to the use of jet skis.
5. Never use the jet ski at night, because the open sea is dangerous at night. You can't see other watercrafts around you, or see the behavior of the water at night. And in case you get stuck out in the ocean at night, you will have to wait for the sun to rise before anyone can see you.
6. Never ride a jet ski without lanyard (the lanyard cuts the engine if you fall, and could save a long swim home).

Research shows that jet ski accidents cause far greater injury than other boating mishaps. Patients sustain more closed-head injuries, trauma to the chest and abdominal injury riding jet skis. Operator inexperience was responsible for 95 percent of all jet ski accidents. Two common factors in those mishaps were speed and improper operating technique, specifically in throttle operation.

State Boating Licensing Laws

State	Mandatory Safety Education	Mandatory Operator Licensing	Is License Certificate Dependent on Passing Exam	State	Mandatory Safety Education	Mandatory Operator Licensing	Is License Certificate Dependent on Passing Exam
Alabama	No	Yes	Yes	Missouri	No	No	No
Alaska	No	No	No	Montana	No	No	Yes
Arizona	No	No	Yes	Nebraska	Yes	No	Yes
Arkansas	Yes	No	Yes	Nevada	No	No	n/a
California	No	No	n/a	New Hampshire	Yes	No	Yes
Colorado	Yes	No	Yes	New Jersey	Yes	Yes	Yes
Connecticut	Yes	Yes	Yes	New Mexico	No	No	n/a
Delaware	Yes	No	Yes	New York	Yes	No	Yes
District of Columbia	Yes	No	Yes	North Carolina	No	No	Yes
Florida	Yes	No	Yes	North Dakota	Yes	No	Yes
Georgia	Yes	No	Yes	Ohio	Yes	No	Yes
Hawaii	No	No	No	Oklahoma	No	No	No
Idaho	Yes	No	Yes	Oregon	Yes	No	Yes
Illinois	Yes	No	Yes	Pennsylvania	Yes	No	Yes
Indiana	Yes	Yes	Yes	Puerto Rico	Yes	No	Yes
Iowa	No	No	No	Rhode Island	No	No	n/a
Kansas	Yes	No	Yes	South Carolina	Yes	No	Yes
Kentucky	Yes	No	Yes	South Dakota	No	No	n/a
Louisiana	No	No	Yes	Tennessee	No	No	n/a
Maine	No	No	n/a	Texas	Yes	No	Yes
Maryland	Yes	No	Yes	Utah	No	No	n/a
Massachusetts	Yes	No	Yes	Vermont	Yes	No	Yes
Michigan	Yes	No	Yes	Virginia	No	No	No
Minnesota	Yes	No	Yes	Washington	No	No	No
Mississippi	Yes	No	Yes	West Virginia	Yes	No	Yes
Wisconsin	Yes	No	Yes	Wyoming	No	No	No



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22 May 2007



if not taken seriously

By *Cpl. Matthew K. Hacker*, 2nd Marine Logistics Group

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.

April 5, 2006

As Mother Nature blesses us with an early warm-weather reunion and the temperature continues to rise, accidents and safety violations do the same. Many people spend quality time with their families participating in recreational activities, but they are not always aware of the regulations and safety precautions involved.

Boating is growing as a pastime and enjoyed by many service members and their families, according to Sgt. Joaquin DeJesus of Newark, N.J., ground safety manager for Headquarters Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group. Unfortunately, the increased number of people boating increases the number of mishaps, which can kill or seriously injure.

"The majority of accidents would not have happened if the victims had taken time to learn proper small boat operating procedures," said DeJesus. Boaters should always check the weather and local forecasts before and during a boating trip to ensure an unexpected storm doesn't rain on their parade. They should also file a float plan with a friend or relative. A float plan is paperwork involving where the boat is being launched, the number of people aboard the boat, if they have any special medical problems, where the destination point will be and the estimated time of return.

Boaters should also know the area, and if they do not, they should ask locals about the area. "A boater should never enter a body of water that is blind to him," said DeJesus. "Knowing one's surroundings is one of the most important factors of boating safely." Furthermore, if a passenger onboard the boat is a non-swimmer or is unsure of his swimming abilities, he should wear a life jacket throughout the entirety of his boating trip. Also, all children under the age of 12 must wear a life jacket at all times, despite their swimming ability, according to federal law.

Speeding is also an accident waiting to happen when it comes to water sports. Although local conditions may warrant the imposition of definite limitations on speed of vessels, a general speed limit is that which is implied in safe vessel operation under existing circumstances. Speed which is excessive under the circumstances, and which endangers persons or property, is one form of reckless operation, which is prohibited by North Carolina boating law," according to North Carolina Boating Regulations.

A growing trend on the water is bow riding. This is where someone sits on the front of the boat and lets his feet drag in the water for fun. This is an unstable process, because the water could feel calm at that exact moment, but a larger ship may create a wake, causing the rider to be thrown off the front of the boat and sucked back into the motor. "Bow riding can be a very fatal experience," said DeJesus.

With that said, every boater must be responsible for his own wake. When a "No Wake Zone" sign is posted, a citation may be legally authorized. Also, creating a large wake in a no wake zone may destroy neighboring boats or even severely injure nearby people. The slogan, "Don't Drink and Drive" pertains to boating as well. Drivers can receive a Driving While Intoxicated citation for driving their boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The penalty for a DWI in a boat is much higher as it's a federal offense.

Boaters who stop and secure their vessels to fish must also follow strict regulations. They must only fish in specified locations, and they must pay close attention to the size and bag limitations. Failure to do so may result in a state, local or Coast Guard citation. Transporting one's boat could also result in safety problems, even before it hits the water. Choosing the proper trailer for your boat is a very important part of boating safety. More damage can be done to a boat by the stresses of road travel than by normal operation. Boat hulls are designed to support weight evenly in water.

When transported on a trailer, your boat should be supported as structurally and evenly across the hull as possible. This will allow for even distribution of the weight of the hull, engine and equipment. It should be long enough to support the whole length of the hull, but short enough to allow the lower unit of the boat's engine to extend freely.

Make sure the tow ball and trailer coupler are the same size and properly secured before entering a highway, as the vibration of road travel can loosen them. Also ensure the coupler is completely over the ball and the latching mechanism is locked after the trailer is loaded evenly from front to rear as well as side-to-side.

To prevent service members and their families from getting in accidents or breaking the law, all boaters are encouraged to take part in formal small boat training programs offered by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary here. The Coast Guard Auxiliary may be contacted for classes, boat inspections and other safety guidance. Boaters must pass the safety course in order to rent any watercraft at any of the three marinas at Marine Corps Air Station New River, Hospital Point or Courthouse Bay. The local auxiliary can be reached at 910-455-9791.

Many boaters store their vessels over the winter and then break them out in the spring thinking they're good to go. This can be a horrible mistake. All boaters should give their boat a mechanical safety inspection every spring to ensure everything is working properly before launching it. "A proper inspection doesn't take very long," said DeJesus. "Make sure you look through the boat's manual and be sure to check the fluids when it tells you to. Preventative maintenance is also key to keeping your boat up to par."

The Group has been fortunate in not having any water incidents since a drowning in 2004, according to DeJesus. They have had a great track record so far and DeJesus wants to keep it that way. "The Marines may hate my guts for constantly filling their brains with safety stuff, but if at the end of the year they're still alive, it's worth it," said DeJesus.