**Boating Safety Tips**

* Always wear a life jacket.
* Avoid alcohol.
* Be especially careful on personal watercrafts.
* Children younger than age 13 ***must wear*** a U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD while underway.
* Enroll in a boater education class.
* Don’t overload your boat.
* Operate at a safe speed.
* Always have a passenger serve as a lookout in addition to the operator.
* Watch out for low water areas or submerged objects.

**Always Wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or Life Jacket**

* Most boating fatality victims were found (recovered) NOT wearing a PFD.
* Always carry extra PFD’s in both adult and child sizes.
* Children younger than 13 years old must wear a PFD while underway.

**Avoid Alcohol**

* The probability of being killed in a boating accident doubles when alcohol is involved.
* Operating a boat under the influence is just as dangerous as driving a car after you’ve been drinking.
* Boating while intoxicated (BWI) is strictly enforced and carries penalties similar to driving while intoxicated penalties, including possible Driver’s License suspension.

**Enroll in a Boater Education Course**

* It’s a good idea for the whole family to enroll in a boater education course.
* A majority (52%) vessels involved in boating accidents are operated by persons 26-50 years of age.

**Be Especially Careful On Personal Watercraft (PWC)**

* PWC operators and passengers ***must wear*** a U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD.
* Before you borrow or rent a PWC, take the time to learn how to operate the vessel and the rules of the waterway.
* Obey the 50-foot rule! Maintain a 50-foot distance from other PWC’s, vessels, persons, shore, or stationary platform or other object unless operating at headway (idle) speed.

**Operate at a Safe Speed**

* Although there are no numerical speed limits on the water, citations may be issued for excessive speed or reckless operation. Use common sense, and operate at a safe speed at all times — especially in crowded areas.
* Excessive speed is a rate of speed greater than is reasonable or prudent without regard for conditions and hazards or greater than will permit a person to bring the boat to a stop within the assured clear distance ahead.