

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary



May 2008

National Safe Boating Campaign

NEWS

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

DID YOU KNOW?...

By Harriet Howard, DVC-AS

World War II brought us the inflatable life jacket, as worn by sailors, pilots and submariners. The fabric, which looked like rubber, dried out easily. Talcum powder was used to keep the fabric pliable. Later on, military technology was applied to making consumer life jackets. These have developed through the years to the various styles we see today. But any life jacket, inflatable or otherwise, must be worn to work. Regarding inflatables, a BoatUS Foundation tester found that they are easier to don out of the water than in the water. So wear your life jacket on board!



The importance of life jacket wear was emphasized by the many boating and water safety professionals speaking at the recent International Boating and Water Safety Summit in San Diego, sponsored by the National Safe Boating Council and the National Water Safety Congress. Vice Chairman Robert Sumwalt of the National Transportation Safety Board, urged every boater to put on a life jacket every time. He pointed out that about 700 boaters die each year because they fail to wear a life jacket and they lack boating education. He asked that the boating organizations, the Coast Guard and the boat manufacturers encourage people to wear their life jackets.

National Safe Boating Week is May 17-23 this year. Our Public Affairs Officers are planning their events with the Wear It! theme in mind: A life jacket fashion show will be held at the 5th Annual Arizona Safe Boating Celebration at Lake Pleasant Regional Park to demonstrate the latest in lightweight, comfortable and stylish life jackets. At the Children's Boating and Water Safety Carnival at the Redding, California, Aquatic Center, there will be a lifejacket giveaway and the Coast Guard Auxiliary will demonstrate, fit and evaluate life jackets. At the Bass Pro Shop in Dania, Florida, there will be a life jacket exchange.

If you are planning a "Fit to Float" event for NSBW at your local Bass Pro Shop, be sure to post your event on the National Safe Boating Campaign website, www.safeboatingcampaign.net.

Whatever your activity might be for NSBW, remind the boating public to "Boat Smart. Boat Safe and Wear It!"