

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY MAY 20



May 12, 2014

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This was featured by the following media, follow link to view:

NBC 2/ABC 7- <http://www.nbc-2.com/story/25568983/as-big-boating-weekend-approaches-authorities-stress-safety>

Wink News- <http://www.winknews.com/Local-Florida/2014-05-20/National-Safe-Boating-Week-promotes-life-jacket-safety>

The News-Press- <http://www.news-press.com/story/life/outdoors/2014/05/20/boaters-wear-life-jackets/9331837/>

Water Rescue Demonstration Promotes Boating Safety in Bonita Springs

WHO: Bonita Springs Fire Control & Rescue District and United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

WHAT: A water rescue demonstration will be utilized as a visual tool to educate boaters on water safety procedures during National Safe Boating Week (May 17-23). Boating Safety Advocates remind boaters of the importance of life jackets and promotes all boaters to **“Wear it!”** A life jacket is an effective and simple life-saving strategy for safe recreational boating! Media can expect to see victims in the water, a water rescue by the BSFD Firefighters on the Marine Rescue Unit, and boating safety education on board the demonstration vessel. Representatives from the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary will be available to discuss safe boating tips for the boating public and the extreme importance of life jackets. Representatives from the Bonita Springs Fire Control & Rescue District will be available to discuss contributing factors to boating accidents, primary causes of death due to such accidents, as well as the rescue demonstration.

WHERE: The rescue demonstration will be held in the water off the Bonita Springs Public Beach and visible by land from the Beach Accesses 1-10.

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Better visibility will be provided via USCG boats on a first-come, first-served basis. If you wish to be on a boat, contact Connie Irvin, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary at 239-454-7328.

**** Important ** Please contact us before Friday, May 16th if you'd like to cover the demonstration on a boat rather than land.**

WHEN: Tuesday, May 20, 2014 @ 9:30AM (please arrive 1 hour prior if possible)

WHY: To prepare boaters for hazards on the water and prevent injuries and drownings by explaining the steps to safety while boating.

National Safe Boating Week is the official launch of the 2014 North American Safe Boating Campaign. This yearlong campaign promotes safe and responsible boating and the value of voluntarily wearing life jackets by recreational boaters through the national theme, **“Wear It!”**

All figures are from the U.S. Coast Guard 2012 Recreational Boating Safety Statistics, the latest official record of reported recreational boating accidents.

- Florida was the #1 State for boating deaths and accidents, having nearly 50 deaths and 662 accidents.
- The Coast Guard counted 4,515 accidents that involved 651 deaths, 3000 injuries, and approximately \$38 million of damage to property as a result of recreational boating accidents.
- Drowning was reported as the cause of death in almost three-fourths of all fatalities, and 85% of those who drowned were not wearing life jackets.

Before heading out, remember to practice these Life Jacket Safety Tips:

- a) No matter what activity you have planned- boating, fishing, paddling, and more- always remember to wear a life jacket every time you are on the water. Accidents on the water can happen much too fast to reach and put on a stowed life jacket.
- b) Make sure your life jacket is U.S. Coast Guard approved. Double-check that your life jacket is appropriate for your favorite water activities.
- c) Take the time to ensure a proper fit. A life jacket that is too large or too small can cause different situational problems.

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- d) Life jackets meant for adults do not work for children. If you are boating with children, make sure they are wearing properly fitted, child-sized jackets. Do not buy a life jacket for your child to “grow into.”

How to Choose the Right Life Jacket

Looking for a life jacket? Today's life jackets come in a variety of shapes, sizes, colors and materials. No matter which life jacket you choose, be sure it is right for YOU, your planned activities and the water conditions that you expect to encounter. Following the below life jacket tips will help ensure that you choose the correct life jacket.

Try It On

- Check the manufacturer's ratings for your size and weight.
- Make sure the life jacket is properly zipped or buckled.
- Raise your arms straight up over your head while wearing your life jacket and ask a friend to gently pull up on the tops of the arm openings.
- If there is excess room above the openings and the life jacket rides up over your chin or face, it does NOT fit properly.

The Bonita Springs Fire Control & Rescue District and United States Coast Guard Auxiliary encourage you to choose a properly fitting life jacket. Boating in the United States can be dangerous, but boaters prepared for emergency situations are more likely to enjoy their time on the water as it's meant to be- relaxing and stress-free!

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