



Safe Boating Tips

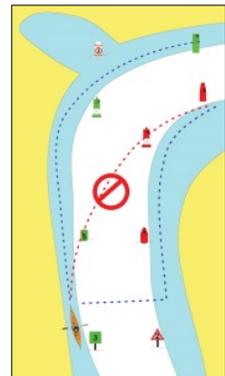
Always wear your life jacket –Cold Water Immersion

In 2017, 13 boaters died in boating-related accidents in Oregon. Six were in nonmotorized boats, six were in motorized and one person was in a double inner tube. Eleven victims were not wearing life jackets. Of the two that were, river hydraulics caused entrapment. Our waterways are always cold and sudden immersion in cold water can lead to an involuntary gasp reflex where a person breathes in water which can lead to inhaling water into the lungs -and drowning. A life jacket will keep a person's head above water so inhaling water is less likely.



Get Educated, Practice Situational Awareness

Operator inattention, operator inexperience, excessive speed, improper lookout and alcohol rank as the top five primary contributing factors in boating accidents. Boaters must be vigilant to their surroundings and pay close attention to the conditions and operation of other boaters and water recreationists. Taking a safe boating course is an inexpensive, yet valuable way to become a safe boater. A [free online paddling course](#) is now available so paddlers can learn who has the right-of-way and other maneuvering rules. [Classroom, equivalency exam and Internet courses](#) are approved by the Marine Board and meet the mandatory education requirements for operators of motorboats over 10 hp.



Boat sober

Alcohol's effects on judgment, vision, balance and coordination are amplified on the water, increasing the chances of being involved in a boating accident. Plus, boating under the influence of intoxicants (BUII) is illegal in Oregon –a Class A misdemeanor. Officers can also arrest boaters for observed impairment below 0.08 percent blood alcohol concentration (BAC). Boaters with a 0.08% BAC immediately lose boating privileges and will pay a hefty, \$6,250 fine. A conviction for a BUII counts toward felony DUII for repeat offenders.



Prepare your boat's engine system before you launch –Clear Gasoline

With new blended fuels, a few extra precautions need to be taken such as adding a fuel stabilizer and making sure your fuel filter is clean before you head out to the launch ramp. Keep spare fuel filters on hand, and if using E-10, be sure to run it through your tank. Don't keep a full tank of blended gasoline –damage can occur to the motor. The Marine Board's website has an interactive map of locations that sell [clear gasoline](#) statewide. Also, make sure your boat is clean before you launch so you [don't spread aquatic invasive species](#). *Clean, drain and dry* your boat between uses.



Be aware of carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that is lethal. The most common way to be exposed to CO gas is when a passenger hangs onto the rear of the boat or swimming platform to body surf — known as “teak surfing.” Teak surfing can be deadly and is illegal in Oregon. Early symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, nausea, dizziness and irritated eyes. The onset of these symptoms is extremely fast, and “teak surfers” can sink into the water before anyone realizes what happened. It’s now believed that previously recorded drowning’s may have actually been caused by CO poisoning.



Boating courtesy

Always operate your boat at a safe speed and at a safe distance from the shore. Watch your wake because it can damage boats and docks. Keep a look out for other boaters — drive defensively. When launching your boat, have a defined role for each passenger and to load your gear before you back down the launch ramp. Be efficient, plan ahead, and use staging areas to pack/unpack your gear when launching and retrieving your boat to prevent bottle-necks at the ramp.



Proper Prior Planning for Prevention

Know the waterway and learn where there are known [waterway obstructions](#) like snags, fallen trees, and strainers. Know where you’re putting in and taking out. Use the Marine Board’s interactive map to find [boat ramps](#) and find out local rules. Don’t set out too close to dusk because once the sun starts to set, it gets cold quickly and disorientation happens just as fast. Check the weather and the tides for tidally influenced rivers and bays.



Let friends and family know where you’re going and when you plan to return.

Fill out a [Float Plan](#).

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For more information about boating safety, contact Ashley Massey, OSMB public affairs specialist at 503.378.2623 or visit www.BoatOregon.com

