

# National Safe Boating Week 2021

National Safe Boating Week—which is scheduled for May 22-28 this year—encourages boaters to maintain reliable vessels and follow responsible boating practices. After all, lacking proper boating precautions can increase the risk of accidents occurring on the water.

In fact, according to the U.S. Coast Guard, over 4,000 boating accidents happen annually— contributing to approximately 2,500 injuries and 600 deaths. Don't let yourself or your passengers become another statistic. Utilize these safe boating tips.

## Before Boating



**Know the rules.** Complete a boating safety course and review applicable laws before operating your vessel. Take note that many states require boaters to obtain a license.



**Refuel carefully.** Ensure your boat has enough fuel prior to your trip. If you notice any unusual fumes after refueling your vessel, don't start the engine.



**Assess your vessel.** Regularly evaluate your boat for damages, and make repairs as needed.



**Pack smart.** Stock your boat with adequate emergency supplies and provide enough life jackets for every passenger.



**Establish a float plan.** This plan—which should inform a trusted individual on land of your trip details and emergency contacts—can help bolster recovery efforts if something goes wrong.



## On the Water



**Watch the weather.** If you notice signs of a storm approaching while boating, return to land immediately.



**Be responsible.** Stay alert at all times and operate your vessel at an appropriate speed. Instruct passengers to remain within the boat's railings whenever it's moving.



**Uphold anchoring and docking protocols.** Always follow the anchoring and docking procedures required for your vessel. These protocols can prevent drifting concerns and pier collisions.



**Avoid alcohol.** Never operate your boat while under the influence. Doing so can negatively impact your judgment, vision and coordination on the water.