

SPECIAL NOTICE

Dymer Creek Area Boat Owners/Operators

New and updated regulations on the requirements for: (1) operating a boat in Virginia waters; and (2) having the correct safety equipment on board are described below. Because of these new regulations, particularly related to boat operator safety education, it is expected that law enforcement personnel will significantly increase their vessel boarding and inspections in our area.

Virginia Boat Operator Education Requirements

Effective 1 July 2016, all boat operators of vessels (power or sail) with engines of ten or more horsepower must be able to show that they have completed a state-approved Boat Operators Safety course. The most comprehensive and effective Boat Operator Safety courses are those taught locally and around the country in classrooms by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the US Power Squadrons.

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Boating Safety Courses: Boat Operator's Safety Courses from various flotilla of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGAux) and be found online at http://cgaux.org/boatinged/class_finder/index.php. Information on boating safety classes taught by U.S. Coast Guard Flotilla 33 (Kilmarnock) can be found at www.flotilla33.org/pe.htm or contact Win Schwab Flotilla Staff Officer for Public Education at winschwab@gmail.com or (cell) 703-635-4100. Upcoming boating courses taught by USCGAux Flotilla 33 in the lower Northern Neck area are as follows:

- Saturday 18 June - Free Public Virginia Boating Safety Course @ Chesapeake Bank Training Center, School Street, Kilmarnock, 8:00 am till 5:00 pm.
- Saturday 25 June - GPS/Chart Reading Course @ Chesapeake Bank Training Center, Time TBD.
- Saturday 16 July - Free Public Virginia Boating Safety Course @ Reedville Rescue Squad Building, 8:00 am till 5:00 pm.
- Saturday 20 August - Free Public Virginia Boating Safety Course @ Chesapeake Bank Training Center, School Street, Kilmarnock, 8:00 am till 5:00 pm.

U.S. Power Squadrons Boating Safety Courses: Boat Operator's Safety

Courses from various squadrons of the U.S. Power Squadrons can be found online at www.usps.org/e_stuff/ABC.html. Information on local boating safety courses taught by the Northern Neck Sail and Power Squadron (NNSPS) website can be found <http://nnsps.org/public-boating-courses/> or contact Dave Cook, the NNSPS Education Officer at buckwheat@rivnet.net or 804-438-6029.

Other Virginia-approved Boating Safety Courses: In addition to the courses offered by the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadrons, the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is offering a free, online course at www.BoatUS.org/virginia and the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries offers an online course at www.boat-ed.com/virginia/index.html.

Proof of Boating Safety Course Completion: After 1 July 2016, boaters must carry proof of taking an approved boating safety course aboard their boat when they are operating the boat. This proof must be the certificate (or a copy of the certificate) showing course completion or a Virginia Lifetime Boating Education Card. It is highly recommended that rather than carrying course completion certificates on board a vessel, that individuals who have completed a boat safety course obtain a ***Virginia Lifetime Boating Education Card***. If a boater or has previously completed a boating safety course from the USPS, the USCGAux, the Commonwealth of Virginia, or other approved source, a Virginia Lifetime Boating Education Card can be obtained by simply completing the Lifetime Boating Education Card by application found online at <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/boating/lifetime-boater-card/> and enclosing a copy of your course completion certification. There is a state preparation fee of \$10.00 per card. Other states recognize the Virginia Lifetime Boating Education Cards and these cards can be used for renting and operating boats in other areas of the United States.

Additional Boating Education: For boat operators interested in formal boating training above the basics, both the Northern Neck Sail and Power Squadron and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 33 (Kilmarnock) offer a wide range of intermediate and advanced courses in seamanship, coastal piloting, navigation, engine maintenance, marine electronics, etc. to their members. Both novice and experienced boaters are invited to join either or both of these fine organizations to improve boating skills and participate in boating operations and social activities. If you are interested in advancing your boating knowledge, please contact any member of these organizations or me, Dave Herndon.

United States Boat Equipment Requirements

All vessels, ranging from small paddle craft and PWCs to large luxury power or sailing yachts, are required by law to have specified safety equipment aboard. Vessel equipment requirements for pleasure boats vary depending of the size and type of boat. The best way to show marine law enforcement (Virginia Marine Police and US Coast Guard) that your vessel meets these requirements is to display a current (2016) Vessel Safety Check Decal on your vessel.

Primary reasons to have a current Vessel Safety Check decal on your boat(s):

§ Displaying a Vessel Safety Check Decal will let you, your aboard guests, and marine law enforcement (US Coast Guard and Virginia Marine Police) know that your vessel meets minimum Virginia and Federal marine safety equipment requirements. Your chances of being routinely boarded and inspected by marine law enforcement are significantly reduced if your vessel shows a current Vessel Safety Check decal. A boarding inspection by law enforcement could take considerable time to perform and even if you have the proper equipment on board and pass the inspection, both your time and the law enforcement vessel's operator's time has been wasted.

§ If you are planning to sell your boat, displaying a Vessel Safety Check decal on your boat will let the potential buyer know that you boat meets all the legally required safety feature and if they purchase it from you they will be legally able to operate the boat without having to purchase additional safety equipment.

If you are boarded and inspected by law enforcement personnel, and your vessel is found to have any marine safety deficiencies, your fines for these violations could be in the thousands of dollars. If I, Dave Herndon, a Certified USCG Auxiliary Vessel Examiner, inspect and find any marine safety equipment deficiencies on your vessel, all you will receive is a list of the deficiencies to be corrected. I will not turn over any found deficiencies to law enforcement. After you have corrected any deficiencies, I will re-examine you boat and issue you a decal.

Vessel Safety Inspections:

Vessel Safety Inspections by US Coast Guard Auxiliary Vessel Examiners are two-part inspections. The first part of the inspection is to determine if your vessel

meets the minimum Virginia and Federal marine equipment safety standards for the type and size of vessel and area of operation. The second part is to discuss optional safety equipment and other items that may assist you as the vessel owner in increasing your boating knowledge and ability to safely operate boats.

If your boat(s) does not have a current Vessel Safety Check, please contact me (Dave Herndon, USCG Auxiliary Vessel Examiner) ASAP to set up an appointment for a free Vessel Safety Check inspection. You can either come to my pier for your vessel inspection or I can go (by boat or car) to your pier. If you see me cruising around the area on either my 17' Boston Whaler Montauk, *Pier Pressure* (it will have a sign on the T-Top saying, "**Vessel Safety Examinations**") or my antique 25' Fisher, *Wayward Wind* (a green hull, ketch-rigged motorsailer with tanbark sails), feel free to hail me and I will either perform a vessel safety check for you or arrange a time to do so. I can also perform safety check on trailered boats.

A Vessel Inspection Table that provides general information on what safety equipment is required for various types and sizes of vessels provided at the end of this email.

Please contact me to set up an appointment to perform safety check on your boats.

Dave

David H. Herndon

- * **Chairman, DCEPA Boating Safety Committee**
- * **US Coast Guard Auxiliary (Marine Safety Officer and Vessel Examiner)**
- * **US Power Squadrons (Port Captain - Chesapeake/Fleets Bay area)**
- * **US Merchant Marine 100-Ton Coastal Masters License (Power, Sail, Towing)**

469 Long Lane Farm (West end of Dymer Creek at 37°40.82'N, 076°22.02'W)

White Stone, VA 22578

Home/Office: 804-435-2056

Cell/Boat: 804-761-0409

Email: dhherndon@aol.com

Minimum Required Basic Marine Vessel Safety Equipment for Pleasure Craft

(Needed to receive Vessel Safety Check decal)

Vessel Type	Identification Name or Number Display	Registration or Documentation	Life Jackets	Visual Distress Signals	Fire Extinguishers	Sound Device (Whistle, Horn)	Navigation Lights
Non-Power Driven (Paddle and Sail-Only Craft)	None	None	1 per person	Yes ²	None	Yes	Yes ³
Power Driven <16 ft. (including Aux Sail)	Yes ¹	Yes	1 per person	Yes ²	1 B-1	Yes	Yes
Power Driven 16 to < 26 ft. (including Aux Sail)	Yes ¹	Yes	1 per person +1	Yes	1 B-1	Yes	Yes
Power Driven 26 to < 40 ft (including Aux Sail)	Yes ¹	Yes	1 per person +1	Yes	2 B-1	Yes	Yes
Power Driven 40 to 65 ft. (including Aux Sail)	Yes ¹	Yes	1 per person +1	Yes	3 B-1	Yes	Yes

¹ State Registration Number or Vessel Name and Hailing Port on Stern for USCG Documented Vessel

² If used at Night

³ Portable White Light (flashlight) is acceptable

Vessel Type	Ventilation	Backfire Flame Control	Pollution Placard	Marpol Trash Placard	Marine Sanitation Device (if installed)	Navigation Rules Onboard	Vessel in Good Condition
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Non-Power Driven (Paddle and Sail-Only Craft)	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ⁶
Power Driven <16 ft. (including Aux Sail)	Yes ⁴	Yes ⁴	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ⁶
Power Driven 16 to < 26 ft. (including Aux Sail)	Yes ⁴	Yes ⁴	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ⁶
Power Driven 26 to < 40 ft (including Aux Sail)	Yes ⁴	Yes ⁴	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ⁶
Power Driven 40 to 65 ft. (including Aux Sail)	Yes ⁴	Yes ⁴	Yes	Yes ⁵	Yes	Yes	Yes ⁶

⁴ Gasoline Inboard Engines Only. Outboard Engines and Diesel Inboard Engines are exempt

⁵ Must have written Trash Disposal Plan signed by Owner

⁶ Deck free of hazards; clean bilge; installed systems (electrical, fuel, galley, heating, etc.) in good order

Optional Marine Vessel Safety Equipment

[Not required to receive Vessel Safety Check decal, but highly recommended (based on vessel type and operating area)]

- § Dewatering Devices (Electric bilge pumps, manual bilge pumps, bucket, etc.)
- § VHF Marine Radio (First line of communications for emergency and other marine communications. Recommended for all vessels)
- § Magnetic Compass and deviation table
- § Anchor(s) and Anchor Lines
- § First Aid Kit
- § GPS/Chartplotter
- § Knot Meter
- § Depthfinder
- § Cell Phone
- § Local Paper Chart or Chart Book

§ Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)