

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources wants you to enjoy safe boating!
Chart a course that keeps you safe and our waterways healthy.

SAFETY FIRST!

TAKE A BOATING SAFETY COURSE

Boaters born on or after July 1, 1972 must carry a NASBLA-approved certificate of boating safety education when operating a **motorized** boat on Maryland waters. There are a variety of ways to obtain a certificate. Just because you were born before the required date listed above does not make you exempt from having an accident.

Get Educated! Visit our website at dnr.maryland.gov/boating for the dates and times of classes being offered. Online classes are now available. Check the schedule on our website.



RIDE INSIDE

Bow riding, or sitting on the edge of a moving boat, is illegal. A fall can put you in the path of the propeller, causing serious injury or death.

LIFE JACKET REQUIREMENTS

Life jackets must be the proper size for the intended wearer, in good, serviceable condition, and readily accessible. All recreational boats must carry one wearable life jacket (type I, II, III or V) for each person aboard.

Any motorized boat 16 feet or longer must also carry one throwable type IV life jacket.

Children under age 13 must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket while underway on a recreational vessel under 21 feet in length on Maryland waters. It must be the proper size and in good, serviceable condition.

*Children under age 4 must wear a life jacket that features additional safety precautions as appropriate for an infant, toddler or young child, which would include an **inflatable headrest**, **web handle**, and **crotch strap**.*

For laws and regulations, please visit dnr.maryland.gov.

DON'T DRINK AND BOAT!

A boat operator whose blood or breath analysis shows an alcohol concentration of 0.08 or greater is considered to be under the influence of alcohol and subject to criminal prosecution. Alcohol has a more dramatic effect on the body while boating.

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

Operators of personal watercraft in Maryland must be at least 16 years old and possess a valid certificate of boating safety education. A personal watercraft must be operated at 6 knots or less when within 100 feet of a vessel, another personal watercraft, shore, wharf, pier, piling, bridge structure, abutment, or people in the water (at least 300 feet from people in the Atlantic Ocean).

TOOLS FOR BOATERS

BOATING ACCESS GUIDE

Locate more than 425 public boating access sites in Maryland and get details on amenities, such as size of facility, parking, accessibility, and hours of operation, using dnr.maryland.gov keyword search *boat ramps*.

DOWNLOAD THE APP!

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources official **mobile app** provides outdoor enthusiasts with the tools needed to enjoy everything the great outdoors have to offer.



NEW LIFE JACKET LABEL

ADULT UNIVERSAL

User Weight: >40 kg (>88 lbs)

Chest Size: 76-132 cm (30-52 in.)

PERFORMANCE LEVEL

Measured in newtons.

- Lower level number offers more mobility, comfort, and style with good flotation, and intended for near shore (calm water) activities.
- Higher level number offers greater flotation, turning, and stability in the water, and for offshore activities (greater time to rescue).

TURN ABILITY (SEE BELOW)

WARNINGS (SEE BELOW)

Check life jacket labels for information about the activities a life jacket is suited for.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

CONTACT THE NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE/COAST GUARD

Report emergency, violation, or abandoned boat: 410-260-8888
Report missing, damaged, or misplaced buoy: 410-643-6521
Report boating fatality to U.S. Coast Guard: 410-576-2525

CHESAPEAKE BAY SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE

Call 877-224-7229 to report boating accidents or reckless activity, a fish kill or algal bloom, floating debris that poses a hazard to navigation, illegal fishing activity, a public sewer leak or overflow, an oil or hazardous materials spill, or a critical area or wetlands violation. To report an oil spill, chemical release, or maritime security incident to the U.S. Coast Guard National Response Center, please call 800-424-8802.

USE VHF FM MARINE CHANNEL 16

The primary marine distress frequency is monitored continuously by the U.S. Coast Guard. Channel 16 must be kept clear—someone's life may depend on it! Use Channel 9 for non-emergency hailing.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Check the weather often. Weather can change in an instant.
Have a float plan: tell someone where you are going, who will be with you and when you plan to return.

PROTECT OUR WATERS



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS

Invasive species aggressively establish themselves at the expense of native ecosystems and pose a threat to biodiversity. In Maryland, aquatic invasives include northern snakehead, blue and flathead catfish, zebra mussels, and underwater plants such as hydrilla.

A single drop of water, a bit of mud, or a tiny plant fragment is all it takes to spread harmful plants and animals. To minimize that risk:

- thoroughly inspect and clean vehicles, vessels, trailers, and all associated gear after use.
- remove all plant material and deposit in dedicated waste stations or trash receptacles.
- dispose of worms, unwanted bait fish, and fish parts in trash receptacles only.
- drain all water before leaving the launch; leave boat plugs out while traveling.
- if possible, allow your boat to dry for five days before launching in another water body.

Learn more at dnr.maryland.gov/invasives.

Check out our **brochure for more information** about how to clean, drain, and dry your boat.

CLEAN MARINAS AND CLEAN BOATERS

Boaters can help protect our waterways by (1) never littering, (2) preventing fuel spills, and (3) avoiding harsh chemicals and cleaners. There are also nearly 150 clean marinas to choose from across the state. Find locations and sign the Clean Boater Pledge at dnr.maryland.gov/boating.

MARINE SEWAGE PUMPOUT FACILITIES

Keep our waters clean—use pumpouts! There are more than 350 pumpout stations in Maryland. Most are grant funded and open to the public. Dumping raw sewage is illegal and harms our natural resources. Locations of grant-funded pumpouts and regulations governing boat discharge are available at dnr.maryland.gov/boating. Broken pumpouts can be reported to 410-260-8772.

WHAT DO I DO WHEN I SELL MY BOAT?

Vessel owners must notify the department within 15 days if a vessel is sold or destroyed. Notification should include date and circumstances (purchaser name and address, amount of sale) and be forwarded to a Licensing & Registration Service Center either in person, by fax, or by mail. More information: dnr.maryland.gov/service-centers.aspx.

PROPER DISPOSAL OF UNWANTED BOATS

If you have a title to an unwanted boat, consider donating it to a charity or maritime museum. Or find a marine salvage company to break down the vessel, recycle parts, and dispose of them. Never abandon a boat at a marina or in our waterways. More information: dnr.maryland.gov/boating/Pages/registration.aspx.

TAKE ME FISHING

A **Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport License** is required to fish in the Chesapeake Bay, Coastal Bays, their respective tributaries, and the Atlantic Ocean.

You can buy your \$50 **Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Boat Decal** at any time from a sport license agent or Department of Natural Resources service center. The decal allows all boat passengers to fish without an individual sport license, but all anglers must register with the state. The primary boat owner receives a free crab license and an individual Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport license, which allows for fishing from shore or another person's boat.

Waterfront property owners or family members, those fishing in a designated license-free fishing area, and passengers on a vessel displaying a Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Boat Decal are exempt from individual licensing, but must register as a saltwater angler at compass.dnr.maryland.gov.

For more information on tidal and nontidal fishing, tagged fish, and educational programs, visit dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries.

FIND A FISHING SPOT

Visit dnr.maryland.gov/Fisheries/Pages/recreational.aspx to find a fishing spot and site-specific details like species, special regulations, tidal/nontidal dividing lines, and boating and parking information.

SHARE YOUR CATCH

Tell all your best fish tales using the Maryland Angler's Log. Reports can include your name, hometown, photos, location information, and any details of your experience you'd like to share. Get started at dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries.

WATCH YOUR SPEED

A new, interactive map shows locations of the hundreds of regulated speed zones in Maryland waters. Find it at dnr.maryland.gov/boating or through the mobile app.

Dear Boaters,

Maryland is home to a rich maritime heritage that continues to thrive. From the freshwater of Deep Creek Lake to the saltwater of the Atlantic Ocean, Maryland's registered boaters have an opportunity to explore and recreate in our state's most precious waterways.

As you cruise the Chesapeake Bay or our many lakes, rivers, and streams, please be sure to practice boating safety every time you are out on the water. Ride inside and always wear a life jacket!



Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio
Secretary

Maryland Department of Natural Resources