

WEATHER

Always check the weather before and during boating. If it looks dicey, don't go out. If it starts to turn bad, head straight for shelter. A marine radio helps you keep in touch with weather updates. Learn to understand and read weather patterns, the wind, waves and the limits of your craft.

GOING OFFSHORE

A good skipper will always treat the ocean with respect, so it's essential to plan and prepare when going offshore. Check the weather forecast and your safety gear.

Plan for any change of conditions by anticipating wind, waves, tides and safe havens.

You must have a marine radio and a 406 MHz EPIRB distress beacon when more than two (2) miles offshore. And, always let someone know where you're going and when you plan to return.

BE PROP AWARE

Boat propellers pose a risk that is easily ignored because they are under the water, 'out of sight and out of mind.' But a strike from a spinning propeller can cause serious injury or even death.

- Ensure the prop area is all clear before starting the engine
- Keep all arms and legs inside the boat
- Keep a proper lookout, especially when near swimmers, observe 'distance off' rules and stay out of designated swimming areas
- Wear a kill-switch lanyard when boating alone.

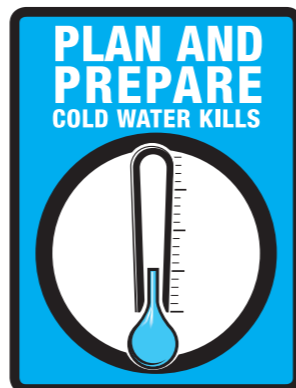


HYPOTHERMIA

Boating in cooler weather increases the risk of developing hypothermia from wind-chill, capsize, and damp and wet clothes.

Hypothermia is the effect of heat loss from the body. Immersion in cold water causes the body to lose heat up to 25 times faster than normal and the shock of sudden immersion in cold water can be a serious threat to survivors of accidents.

- Plan and prepare to avoid hypothermia. Minimise the risk of capsize or swamping, keep an eye on the weather and if in doubt, don't go out
- Wear warm thermal clothing, including a beanie and add wet weather gear over your warm clothes to provide wind proofing. Foul weather gear or waders may help keep you warm but are extremely difficult to swim in. So, if you wear this sort of gear in a boat – put on a lifejacket
- Wear a lifejacket at all times of heightened risk
- In the water, don't swim. Remain with your craft in the "huddle" position
- If hypothermia is suspected, try to reduce any further heat loss and commence rewarming slowly.



NAVIGATION LIGHTS

When night falls, it is a completely different world on the water. Vessels that operate from sunset to sunrise, whether at anchor or underway, must carry and exhibit the correct lights. When boating at night – go slow, be seen, keep a lookout and be bright. Make sure you have the right lights for your craft, they are working properly and mounted in a position that gives you optimum night vision and allows others to see you from every direction.

Carry a working waterproof torch. It may help others see you if you shine your torch on your sails or superstructure. Make sure you don't affect your night vision, or the vision of other boat skippers.

If you anchor at night, show an all-round white light where it can best be seen.

Navigating at night requires special care – look and listen at all times, as a number of hazards are unlit such as logs, moored boats or sandbanks.

If you have the slightest doubt, stop, ensure you are lit and have a good look around you.

For more information, visit www.maritime.nsw.gov.au or call the info line 13 12 56.

Maritime is a division of Roads and Maritime Services.

**YOU'RE THE SKIPPER
YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE!**

Printed on recycled stock



**YOU'RE THE SKIPPER
YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE**



**YOU'RE THE SKIPPER
YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE!**

MAR0303/JUC 02/12

**YOU'RE THE SKIPPER
YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE!**

SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE BOATING

The skipper of every boat is responsible for the safety of their vessel and the people on board.

While that responsibility presents some challenges, a seaworthy and well-prepared vessel in good hands can provide an immense amount of enjoyment for you, your friends and your family.

Preparation and awareness are two of the most important elements of safe and responsible boating.

As skipper, take time to ensure the boat is ready and also spend time to consider the safety issues highlighted in this brochure.

More information on these and other boating safety issues is available at www.maritime.nsw.gov.au

LIFEJACKET – WEAR IT

Lifejackets save lives. But a lifejacket will not save your life if you are not wearing it.

You must carry a lifejacket for every person on board. But don't just have lifejackets on board, make sure you and your passengers wear them.

New rules apply in NSW and you must wear a lifejacket in situations including if you are:

- Under 12 years of age
- In a small vessel up to 4.8m long when boating alone, at night, on open (ocean) waters and on alpine waters
- On a PWC
- Being towed
- When wearing waders on alpine waters
- Instructed to by the skipper.

For more information, visit www.lifejacketwearit.com.au or call the info line **13 12 56**.



GO EASY ON THE DRINK

The blood alcohol limit on the water is the same as on land, 0.05, but that's where the similarities end. Drinking on the water isn't the same as drinking on land. Wind, waves and the sun can increase the effects of alcohol on your body. You are more likely to get drunk quicker and get disorientated, increasing the chance of a boating accident or drowning.

Be aware that random breath testing applies to the skipper of any vessel while underway.



KEEP A PROPER LOOKOUT

It may seem obvious, but you must keep an eye on what's going on around you. The skipper must be in a good lookout position at all times to watch and listen carefully, especially in bad weather, restricted visibility or darkness.

- Don't forget to look all around – even behind you
- Take special care in areas where higher speed vessels operate
- Keep watch for smaller vessels that can be difficult to see, especially kayaks and dinghies
- Watch for swimmers, floating debris and whitewater that may indicate submerged reefs and rocks
- Even when you have an observer while towing a person on skis or tubes, the skipper is always responsible for keeping a proper lookout
- Keep safe, keep to the right, especially when entering a narrow passage or on a sharp bend.



CARBON MONOXIDE

Carbon monoxide is a colourless and odourless gas produced when carbon-based fuel burns. Exposure to this gas can cause death or serious injury.

Carbon monoxide is normally at the back of the boat when engines and generators are running. If you have a headache, feel nauseous, dizzy or drowsy, move to fresh air.

To keep these gas levels under control and prevent poisoning, regular boat and engine maintenance and proper operation are important.

SPEEDING

Speeding on the water is the same as speeding on the road. It can kill. A skipper is responsible for taking a number of things into account.

CONDITIONS

Conditions on the water can change in the blink of an eye. The wind might pick up, wave size might increase and the current may change. The skipper is responsible for making sure a boat travels at a safe speed. If in doubt, slow down to suit the conditions.

VISIBILITY

You must slow down in heavy rain, thick fog, dense mist and intense glare when you're on the water. If you are travelling at night you are responsible for displaying navigation lights. Not all hazards are lit, so special caution is needed at night.

OTHER VESSELS

You must not speed close to other vessels. Slow down and take care in busy waterways and when you're near moored or anchored vessels and smaller craft. Extra caution is needed around working vessels or large boats that find it hard to manoeuvre.

NAVIGATION HAZARDS

Waterways are filled with hazards. Keep an eye on your speed in shallow or unfamiliar waters. Not all hazards are marked or lit, signs and buoys can be damaged, and lights can be out of action. You can report damage to nav markers to the info line **13 12 56**.

YOUR VESSEL

All boats are different. The size of your hull, engine and propeller type can affect your manoeuvrability. You are responsible for knowing your vessel's limitations. How quickly can you stop and turn?

CHILDREN

Children need to be carefully watched. Be especially careful not to allow children to be on the bow or to sit with legs dangling over the side while under power.