

OCEAN SHORES POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

Chief of Police Mike Styner

Date: May 25, 2009

Boating Season Underway

The Memorial Day Weekend generally marks the beginning of boating season in Ocean Shores. The season runs through the summer and concludes after Labor Day. What does the Boating Season actually mean?

The Washington States Parks and Recreation Commission supervises the Boating Safety Program for the State. Governmental agencies, such as the Grays Harbor Sheriff's Department and the Ocean Shores Police Department have recognized Boating Safety Programs that allow the State to provide funding to keep these programs operational. Yearly vessel registration fees are distributed to agencies with recognized programs that allow for them to staff programs and obtain equipment at no charge to the departments. The Ocean Shores Police Department's new patrol boat was obtained through a grant from this program.

The Ocean Shores Police Department currently has 10 officers who have received training and became Certified Boating Safety Officers. These officers patrol the 26 miles of interconnected waterways throughout Ocean Shores. During boating season, as manpower is available, the boat patrols between the hours of 10AM until 6PM on the weekends and between 2pm until 6pm on Fridays. Recent grant funding has allowed for officers additionally to be out Monday-Thursdays from 4pm until 7pm.

The Ocean Shores Police Department is going to be aggressively watching for unsafe speeding boats and the proper use and carrying of personal floatation devices, commonly know as life jackets. Below is a short list of boating operation requirements. A more thorough list (although not complete) can be found at www.osgov.com/police and then click on Marine Patrol.

- All vessels must have valid registration, and registration decals and registration numbers must be properly displayed.
- Every vessel is required to have a Type I, II or III personal floatation device (PFD) for each person on board.
- Children under 12, while on vessels 19 feet or less, are required to wear a Coast Guard approved PFD at all times while on deck.
- Children under seven shall wear at least a Type III PFD of appropriate size anytime a vessel is underway

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- Operator/Occupant(s) must wear at least a Type III PFD while in a canoe, kayak or similar type vessel that includes paddleboats, and life rafts.
- No one under 10 years old may operate any motorboat.
- No one under 16 years old may operate a motorboat with an engine larger than 10 horsepower unless under immediate adult supervision. (This includes personal watercraft)
- Personal watercraft are prohibited from all freshwater areas within the City. (Law Enforcement is exempt from this restriction)
- The maximum speed limit on the lakes of Ocean Shores is 35 mph unless posted otherwise. All canals are 5-mph or wake speed.
- A vessel shall not exceed five miles per hour or wake speed when operating on Duck Lake north of the East Chance Ala Mer NE bridge
- The speed limit within 50 feet of any shoreline, buoy, dock or other vessels is 5 mph or wake speed.
- Boating While Intoxicated and negligent vessel operations are strictly forbidden.
- All vessels must stop when signaled to do so by the Marine Patrol.
- Boating Safety Education Cards are required to be carried by all vessel operators for vessels with motors 15 hp or larger under the following timelines:
Persons born before January 1, 1955 are exempt from this requirement which will be phased in over several years requiring certain age groups to obtain cards by specific dates.
 - 2008 12 years to 20 years old
 - 2009 25 years and under
 - 2010 30 years and under
 - 2011 35 years and under
 - 2012 40 years and under
 - 2013 50 years and under
 - 2014 60 years and under

After 2014 All boat operators will be required to possess a Boating Safety Education Card except those exempted elsewhere in RCW 79A.60.640

Further information on boating safety can be found on the Washington State Parks and Recreation website at www.parks.wa.gov/boating and in the Ocean Shores Municipal Code found through the City of Ocean Shores website at www.osgov.com/government.

The Ocean Shores Police Department wants every boater to have a safe and pleasant boating experience while in Ocean Shores.