



BOAT SAFETY

Safe boating is no accident. Every year, about 200 people die in boating accidents across Canada.

Ensure safety and prevent accidents when boating

- **Wear your life-jacket.** Approximately 90 percent of all drowning victims in recreational boating incidents were not wearing a life-jacket or personal flotation device. There should be a life-jacket or personal flotation device for every person on the boat. They must be Canadian-approved and of an appropriate size for each person.
- **Don't drink and drive.** At least 40 percent of all power boating fatality victims had a blood alcohol level above the legal driving limit. Driving a boat while impaired is a Criminal Code offence. You could be fined \$600 or more, prohibited from operating a boat for up to three years and imprisoned, possibly for life, not to mention seriously injured or killed.
- **Never stand** up in a small powerboat, canoe or other similar watercraft.
- **Don't overload** your boat with too many passengers or too much heavy gear.
- **Follow the 'rules of the road'.** Be courteous of others using the waterways and obey all boating rules. Be watchful of swimmers and other boaters, and always have a spotter for water-skiers and tube riders.
- **Keep fire extinguishers** at the most fire sensitive areas on your vessel such as the galley or engine area. Ensure your crew knows where the fire extinguishers are located.
- **Learn to swim.** The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and

around the water is to learn to swim. This includes anyone participating in any boating activity.

- **Develop a float plan.** Anytime you go out in a boat, give a responsible person details about where you will be and how long you will be gone. This is important because if the boat is delayed because of an emergency, becomes lost, or encounters other problems, you want help to be able to reach you.
- **Find a boating course** in your area -- these courses teach about navigation rules, emergency procedures and the effects of wind, water conditions, and weather.
- **Watch the weather:** Know local weather conditions and prepare for electrical storms. Watch local news programs. Stop boating as soon as you see or hear a storm.