



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 17, 2017

MEDIA CONTACTS

Matthew Hamner

Chief of Police

206.842.5211

NOW IS THE TIME TO GET A BOATER EDUCATION CARD
Boater Education Card is Required for Washington State Boaters Born After 1955

Bainbridge Island, Wash., (March, 2017) The Bainbridge Island Police Department and the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission Boating Program would like to remind boaters that in Washington state, boaters born after 1955 that are operating a vessel with a 15 horsepower engine—or greater—must carry the Boater Education Card to prove they have passed a boater education course.

During the national ‘Spring Aboard’ campaign, March 19-25, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) along with state, federal and nonprofit partners are encouraging boaters to enroll in a boating education course prior to the kickoff of the boating season.

“I wish everyone a wonderful boating experience and have found the safest way to do this is by completing a boating safety course,” said Bainbridge Island Police Chief Matthew Hamner. In fact, based on boating safety statistics, Chief Hamner recommends that everyone should complete a boating safety course.

After completing a course, students must apply for a Boater Education Card with proof of course completion. The one-time fee for the card is \$10. Courses must be approved by NASBLA to qualify for a Boater Education Card. To ensure a course qualifies, look for the NASBLA-approved logo. More information about courses and the boater education card is here: www.boatered.org

During the ‘Spring Aboard’ week, many course providers are offering discounts or other incentives for students who enroll in a course. Each course provides a certificate, once successfully complete, and the course operators charge a fee for the certificate. The certificate is required to obtain a Boater Education Card.

Some important things to know:

- U.S. Coast Guard statistics indicate that of the accidents where the level of operator education was known, 80 percent of boating deaths occurred on boats where the boat operator

had never received boating education instruction.
(http://uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.php)

- Boat operators born before Jan. 1, 1955 are exempt from the Washington requirement but may choose to get a card if they plan to go boating in Canada or Oregon, which require proof of having completed a boating education course. The Washington State Boater Education Card is valid in those two areas.
- 49 States and U.S. Territories require proof of completion of a boating education course for operators of some powered vessels.

For more information, contact Lead Marine Officer Erik Peffer at the Bainbridge Island Police Department at 206.780.4665 or email at: epeffer@bainbridgewa.gov.

###