

# Importance of Nationally Approved Boating Safety Education



Provided by Mike Karlovich  
ABC-Pamlico Writer

The 2025 Boating Season is upon us and many boaters, new and seasoned captains are engaged in preparing their boat and looking forward to an active summer on the water.

Have you taken a basic boating course? As a resident of North Carolina, born after January 1, 1988, to operate any vessel with more than a 10-horsepower motor, you must complete a boater education safety course approved by NASBLA (*National Association of State Boating Law Administrators*). This requirement applies to those operating personal watercraft as well—something that many folks may tend to overlook.

Do you know what safety equipment is needed on your boat and what is required by NC State Law? Do you know Navigation Rules that help you when underway on your boat? How about Navigation Aids and what they are telling you while you are out on the water?

Do you have a VHF radio on your boat and do you know how to use it in a critical situation? Learning how to use a VHF radio when there is an urgent need is not fun, very frustrating and can result in delayed responses for assistance.

How do you safely tie your boat or personal water craft to the dock? Do you know the basics of towing and trailering your boat or personal water craft?

If you are out on the water and the sun sets, what lights and signals are needed and what do they mean. Do you know how to interpret other boats lights and signals. How do you handle your boat in adverse conditions; as we often have coastal unexpected weather pop up?

I encourage you to take a comprehensive in-person boating course. Taking a boating course reduces your risk of accidents and injuries. Encourage your crew to join you as well! All boaters can benefit...sailors, power boaters, pontoons boaters, fisherman and personal watercraft. You may also qualify you for a discount on your boat insurance.

There is a upcoming 2-day America's Boating Course scheduled for April 26 and May 3<sup>rd</sup> to help get you ready for the boating season.

A recent release from the US Coast Guard indicated that 75% of deaths occurred on boats where the operator did not receive boating safety instruction.

This article is given courtesy of your local America's Boating Club of the Pamlico a great resource to help you increase your knowledge, navigation skill building and safety. To learn more details about the upcoming courses and to register, contact Bob at [pspsed@gmail.com](mailto:pspsed@gmail.com) or give him a call at 518-703-4881.