

Education can make boating safe

Boating education teaches boaters to be safe, knowledgeable, and responsible. To maintain U.S. Coast Guard recognition the state's course must be a minimum of eight hours in length, although most classes are about nine hours. Courses are organized and conducted by volunteer instructors in many communities across the state. These dedicated instructors believe that boating education holds the key to the future of boating. The course covers navigation, trailering, equipment requirements, personal watercraft, safety tips, drugs and alcohol, self rescue, and marine theft.

Beginning in 2001, any person born on or after January 1, 1989 must complete an approved boater safety education course in order to operate a motorboat or sailboat on public waters in Kansas. This requirement does not apply to a person operating a motorboat or sailboat accompanied by and under the direct and audible supervision of a person over 17 years of age who either possesses a certificate of completion of an approved boater safety education course, or is legally exempt from the requirement. This requirement does not apply to anyone 21 years of age or older, regardless of their date of birth.

In addition, anyone ages 12-15 who want to operate a personal watercraft alone is required to successfully complete a boating

safety course. Boating safety courses that are approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and recognized by the United States Coast Guard shall meet these educational requirements.

Out of state boaters who boat on Kansas waters must comply with the education requirements. All states provide a NASBLA approved course that will also be acceptable in Kansas.

Instructors advertise their classes in local newspapers, over radio, and on television. Posters could be put up at sporting goods stores, marinas, and park offices. A list of classes is sent to all department stores, sporting goods departments, marinas, park offices, and boat dealers.

Boat US Foundation, maintains a list of all boating classes offered nationally. Call 1-800-336-BOAT and ask for classes that are available in Kansas. Most classes require pre-registration. Classes that are sponsored by a community college, technical school, or recreation department may charge a small registration fee. Each class will have a contact person and phone number of where to register.

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks offers a classroom setting with a volunteer or staff instructor. The course is a minimum of 8 hours in length with 9 hours as average. Classes are offered year round throughout the state. Pre-registration is usually required and

occasionally there is a pre-registration fee.

The department also offers a distance learning or home study course and has contracted with Boat-ED to provide an internet home study course. The fee for this online course is \$15. Go to www.boat-ed.com for more information. Text books can be picked up at local state park and regional offices, or mailed to you by calling (785) 296-2281 or email. Some boat dealers and marinas also keep a supply of books. Cost for this course is the price of the stamp to mail the test card back in for correction.

For more information contact Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Cheryl Swayne: Boating Education Coordinator, Office of the Secretary, 1020 S. Kansas, Topeka, KS 66612-1327; phone: (785) 296-2281.



Helpful hints can be 'reel' good

(NAPSA)—An estimated 50 million Americans fish for fun. For them, and those who'd like to join them, here are a few hints:

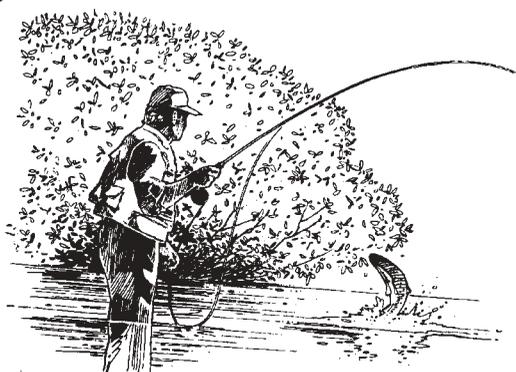
- Some fish spines can hook you. Use a hook extractor, wire cutter or needle nose pliers to handle such fish and wear sturdy gloves.

- Don't eat your catch before it's cooked. That can expose you to intestinal parasites.

- Protect your person. Wear a hat, sunscreen and sunglasses and a personal flotation device if you fish from a boat.

- Carry a first-aid kit, including adhesive bandage strips and disinfectant. For strains and sprains, a new type of athletic bandage can come to an angler's aid. Made of a 98 percent cotton, two percent latex weave, it draws moisture away from the skin but won't stretch out of shape. This allows for maximum blood flow while maintaining muscle support. Completely self-adhering and requiring no pins or clips, the SelfGrip Bandage does not stick to hair or skin and tears easily to the desired length.

- Cast carefully to keep from getting hooked. Leave about 30 feet behind you.



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Budweiser

We will be giving you an update on the Sebelius Reservoir Fishing Contest as it progresses through the season. We urge you to enter the contest at T&D Bait Shop, 307 E. Penn, Norton, now through September

Budweiser Fishing Contest Report
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