

# FORT GORDON SAFETY GRAM 14-03

## BOATING SAFETY

Each year hundreds of lives are lost... thousands are injured... and millions of dollars of property damage occurs because of preventable recreational boating accidents on U.S. waterways. Too often pleasure outings turn tragic. You — as a boat operator, passenger, or concerned individual — can make a difference.

In 2013, the Coast Guard counted 4,062 accidents that involved 560 deaths, 2,620 injuries, and approximately \$39 million dollars of damage to property as a result of recreational boating accidents.

The fatality rate was 4.7 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels. This rate represents a 13% decrease from last year's fatality rate of 5.4 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels.

Where cause of death was known, seventy-seven (77) percent of fatal boating accident victims drowned. Of those drowning victims with reported life jacket usage, **eighty-four (84) percent were not wearing a life jacket.**

### Wearing Your Life Jacket

Boaters enjoy the feel of sun and spray. So it's tempting to boat without wearing a life jacket — especially on nice days. But modern life jackets are available in a wide variety of shapes, colors, and sizes. Many are thin and flexible. Some are built right into fishing vests or hunter coats. Others are inflatable — as compact as a scarf or fanny pack until they hit water, when they automatically fill with air.

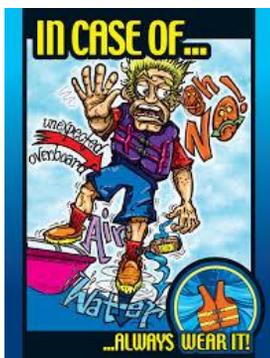
**There's no excuse not to wear a life jacket on the water!**

Things to Know:

Certain life jackets are designed to keep your head above water and help you remain in a position which permits proper breathing.

To meet U.S. Coast Guard requirements, a boat must have a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, III, or V life jacket for each person aboard. Boats 16 feet and over must have at least one Type IV Throwable device as well.

Life jackets should be tested for wear and buoyancy at least once each year. Waterlogged, faded, or leaky jackets should be discarded.



## INSTALLATION SAFETY OFFICE

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