



2020 CONNECTICUT

# BOATER'S GUIDE

Rules and Resources



EXPIRES APRIL 30, 2021

# 21

GENERAL ISSUE  
CONN D.M.V.

EXPIRES APRIL 30, 2021

# 21

SUPPLEMENTAL  
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# 2020 CONNECTICUT BOATER'S GUIDE



*A digest of boating laws and regulations*  
Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

**State of Connecticut**  
Ned Lamont, Governor

**Department of Energy & Environmental Protection**  
Katie Dykes, Commissioner  
Michael Lambert, Bureau Chief

**Boating Division**  
Peter Francis  
Boating Director



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Environmental Analyst

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This guide is intended to provide a summary of the most pertinent laws and regulations concerning boating, and to provide information on these opportunities in Connecticut. No attempt has been made to employ the exact wording of laws and regulations, nor to provide their complete listing. For legal purposes the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and the General Statutes of Connecticut must be consulted. A listing of the General Statutes of Connecticut can be found on the Connecticut General Assembly website at [www.cga.ct.gov](http://www.cga.ct.gov) and information on state regulations is at <https://eregulations.ct.gov>.

## DIRECTORY OF BOATING SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION  
BOATING DIVISION

333 Ferry Road, P.O. Box 280, Old Lyme 06371-0280 • 860-434-8638

DEEP Website: [www.ct.gov/deep](http://www.ct.gov/deep) • FAX: 860-434-3501 • DEEP Boating Website: [www.ct.gov/deep/boating](http://www.ct.gov/deep/boating)

E-mail: [deep.boating@ct.gov](mailto:deep.boating@ct.gov)

### LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

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**860-424-3333**

You can report violations of boating laws and regulations to Emergency Communications. Include the following information when you call: (1) the registration number of the violator, (2) the violation, (3) the date, time, location, and (4) your name and address.

**Administration** (Hartford) 860-424-3012

**Eastern District** (Marlborough)

East of CT River & Middlesex County 860-295-9523

**Marine District** (Old Lyme)

Connecticut shoreline towns 860-434-0316

**Western District** (Harwinton)

West of Connecticut River 860-485-0226

### DEEP PROCESSING OFFICES

**DEEP Eastern District Headquarters,**

209 Hebron Rd., Marlborough, CT 06447

(Boating certificates processed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) 860-295-9523, 8:30-4 pm

**DEEP Licensing & Revenue,**

79 Elm St., Hartford, CT 06106-5127

860-424-3105, M-F, 9-4 pm

**DEEP Marine Headquarters,**

333 Ferry Rd., Old Lyme, CT 06371

860-434-8638 M-F, 8-4 pm

**DEEP Western District Headquarters,**

230 Plymouth Rd., Harwinton, CT 06791

860-485-0226 M-F, 8:30-4pm

### OTHER DEEP SERVICES

**DEEP SPILL INFORMATION 866-337-7745**

**DEEP Land and Water Resources Division**

(Harbor/Harbormaster Information, Mooring and Dock Permits), 860-424-3034

**DEEP Fisheries Division (Inland)** 860-424-3474

(Marine) 860-434-6043

**DEEP Store (Maps and Publications)** 860-424-3555

**DEEP State Parks Division** 860-424-3200

**DEEP Wildlife Division** 860-424-3011

**National Response Center Sewage Spills** 800-424-8802

### OTHER AGENCIES

**United States Coast Guard (USCG)**

(Marine Radio VHF Channel 16)

**USCG Sector Long Island Sound** 203-468-4401

**USCG Station Eaton's Neck (NY)** 631-261-6959

**USCG Station New Haven (CT)** 203-468-4498

**USCG Station New London (CT)** 860-442-4471

**Department of Motor Vehicles**

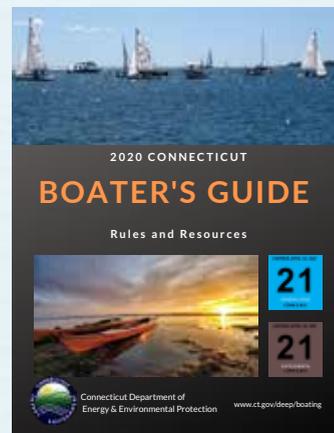
(Vessel Registration Information) 860-263-5718

**Department of Revenue Services**

(Boat Sales & Use Tax Information) 860-297-5962

**Office of Secretary of the State**

(Vessel Lien Information) 860-509-6004



Top cover photo by David Ossias in Long Island Sound.  
Lower photo by Jeff Martin at Great Island, Old Lyme, CT

## About this Guide

Welcome to the 2020 Connecticut Boater's Guide. This joint venture between the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection and Turley Custom Media opens many new doors.

Turley Custom Media, a division of Turley Publications, Inc., a multi-faceted printing company, works to bring creative solutions to expand your audience. Turley Custom Media supports CTDEEP with the design, layout and editing of the Connecticut Boater's Guide, while managing the marketing and advertising sales to companies and organizations relevant to you, the reader.

Advertising revenue not only generates savings, it also lowers production costs, allowing CTDEEP to focus funding on what really matters – keeping Connecticut's waterways safe, clean and fun for all boaters!

We welcome your feedback or advertising interests. Please contact us at 800-824-6548 or [ctboaters@turley.com](mailto:ctboaters@turley.com).

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**Katie S. Dykes, Commissioner**

Dear Connecticut Boaters,

It is my pleasure to share with you the 2020 edition of the *Connecticut Boater's Guide*. This publication is packed with tips and tools for every type of recreational boater in our state – from paddling to yachting and everything in between. Whether you enjoy sailing, stand-up paddle boarding, jet skiing or cruising – there's something in here for you!

As you spend some time with this guide, you will find important information about Connecticut's boating laws and regulations, education requirements, and required safety equipment to ensure safe and enjoyable on-water excursions. The guide also highlights access points allowing boaters to easily locate public launches throughout the state so you can explore the many beautiful inland and coastal waterways of Connecticut.

This Boater's Guide also contains information on how to locate pumpout services. Be sure to follow the link to the mobile device-friendly pumpout map making it easier than ever to find and schedule a pumpout. I am excited to announce that four of the 24 pumpout boats operating in Connecticut are now zero-emission vessels powered by solar-electric energy. By using these innovative pumpout vessels, Connecticut boaters are supporting clean water AND clean air.

New this year for Connecticut boaters is the Aquatic Invasive Species Stamp program – the funds from which help combat aquatic invasive species in our waterways. On the following pages we have provided information about the stamp program and what boaters can do to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Youth can also promote clean and safe boating to their peers through our popular Student Ambassador Program for middle- and high-school students. Details of the program can be found in this guide and if your school isn't already involved, please consider joining.

I hope you get out and enjoy Connecticut's waterways during the upcoming boating season. Remember to boat sober and always wear your life jacket. We'll see you on the water.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katie S. Dykes".

Katie S. Dykes  
Commissioner

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## NEW CHANGES FOR 2020 – LOOK FOR TEXT IN RED



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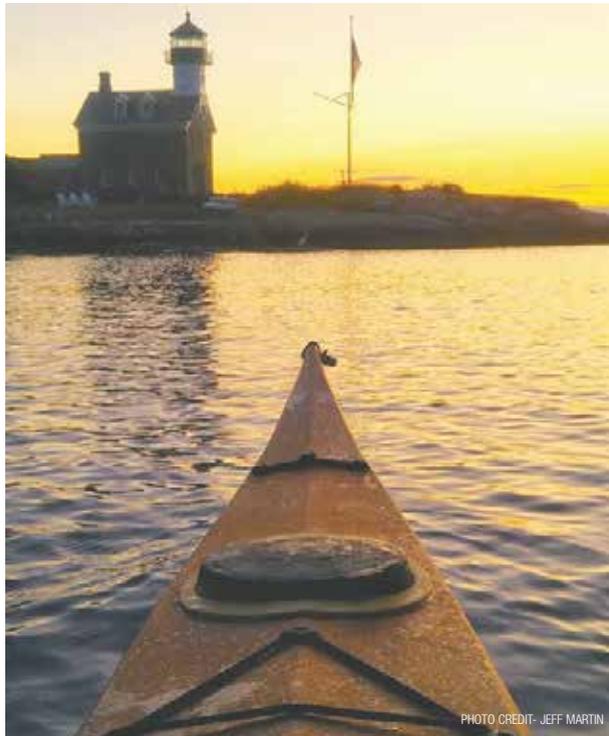


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# Certificate & Education



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In most cases, Connecticut requires boat operators to obtain education and certification. This section will describe what is required.

## Boats other than Personal Watercraft

Residents of Connecticut, persons owning real property in Connecticut, or persons with vessels registered in Connecticut must have either a Safe Boating Certificate or a Certificate of

Personal Watercraft Operation to legally operate any boat with a motor, or non-motorized sailboat 19 ½ feet in length or longer.

### Exceptions:

- On inland waters of this state with a 10 horsepower limit and between one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset, no certificate is required for a person operating an electric motor (rated at 106 lbs. of thrust or less). However, the vessel must be

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Connecticut Boating Certificates provides PUBLIC CLASSES every Saturday and Sunday during the Boating Season (March through September) and offers PRIVATE LICENSING CLASSES yearly 7 Days a Week that can be conducted in your home, Club, Place of Business or even at our brand new facility in Southbury, CT

Please check our website as we are slated to offer the OFFICIAL COASTAL BOATER NAVIGATION ENDORSEMENT COURSE once a month starting this winter.

Visit [www.connecticutboatingcertificates.com](http://www.connecticutboatingcertificates.com) for all the details



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For more Rex Marine Center information, call 203-866-5555. The Rex Boating Club can be reached by contacting the Founder & Managing Member, Bill Gardella, at 203-984-1278 or [Bill@Rexmarine.com](mailto:Bill@Rexmarine.com)

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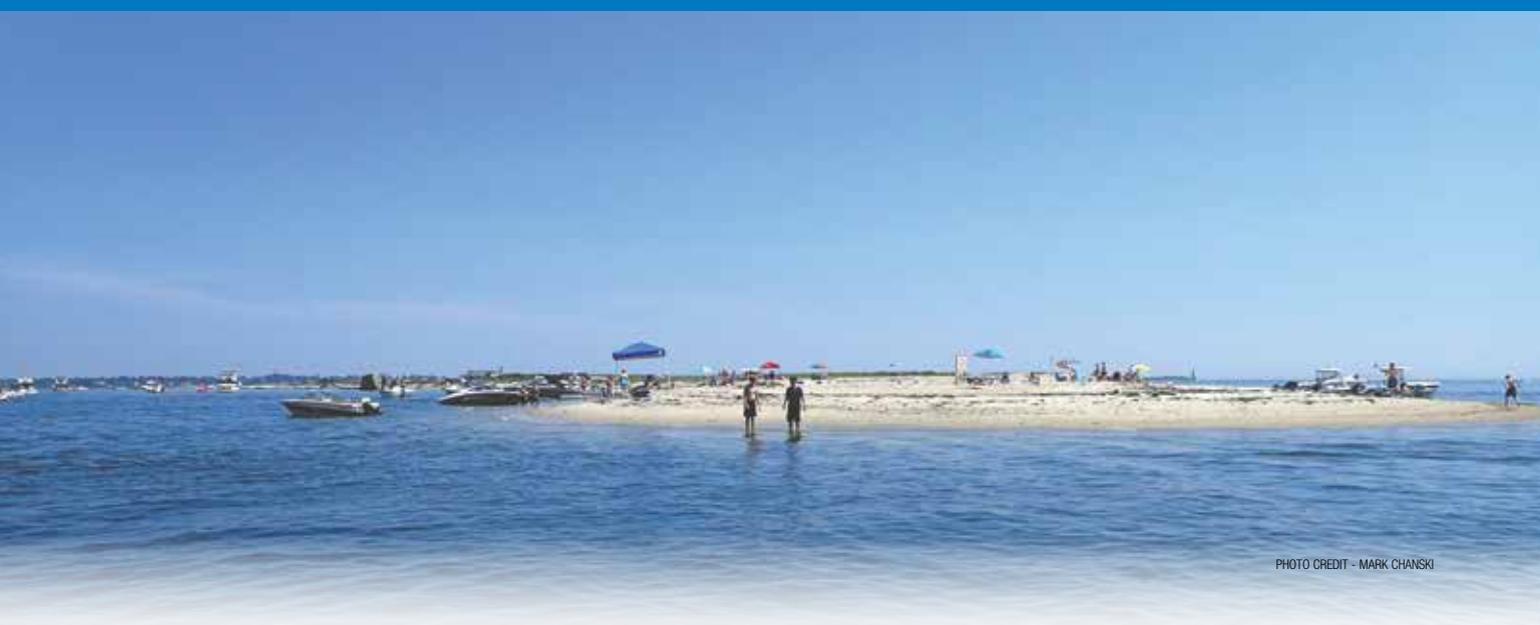


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registered.

- A person who has a valid operator's license issued by the United States Coast Guard does not require a Safe Boating Certificate to operate a vessel other than a personal watercraft. They must have the original license on board the recreational vessel on which they are operating.

## Non-Resident Certificate Requirements

Connecticut recognizes a valid Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation for operating a personal watercraft that is issued by a reciprocal state (NY, MA, RI or NH) for a non-resident even if they own real property in CT. Once a person holding a certificate from a reciprocal state makes CT their permanent residence, he or she must obtain a CT boating certificate within 90 days of becoming a CT resident.

Personal watercraft operators **MUST** have a recognized Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation to operate legally.

## Reciprocity

The Connecticut Safe Boating Certificate and the Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation are accepted in many states. Connecticut recognizes on our waters, certificates from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Rhode Island and is expanding our reciprocity with other states (check our website for changes). If you are boating in another state, check with that state first. Adherence to Connecticut state law remains the responsibility of the boater.

**New Connecticut residents:** Any person changing their residence from a reciprocal state to Connecticut may use their reciprocal boating certificate in Connecticut for only 90 days after becoming a resident. Any time during those 90 days that

person may use their certificate as evidence that they meet Connecticut's boating education requirement, and may purchase a Connecticut boating certificate.

## Safe Boating Certificate or Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation

**A Safe Boating Certificate (SBC)** will allow an individual to operate any recreational vessel, except a personal watercraft on Connecticut's waters. In order to meet the requirements for a Safe Boating Certificate (SBC), an individual must:

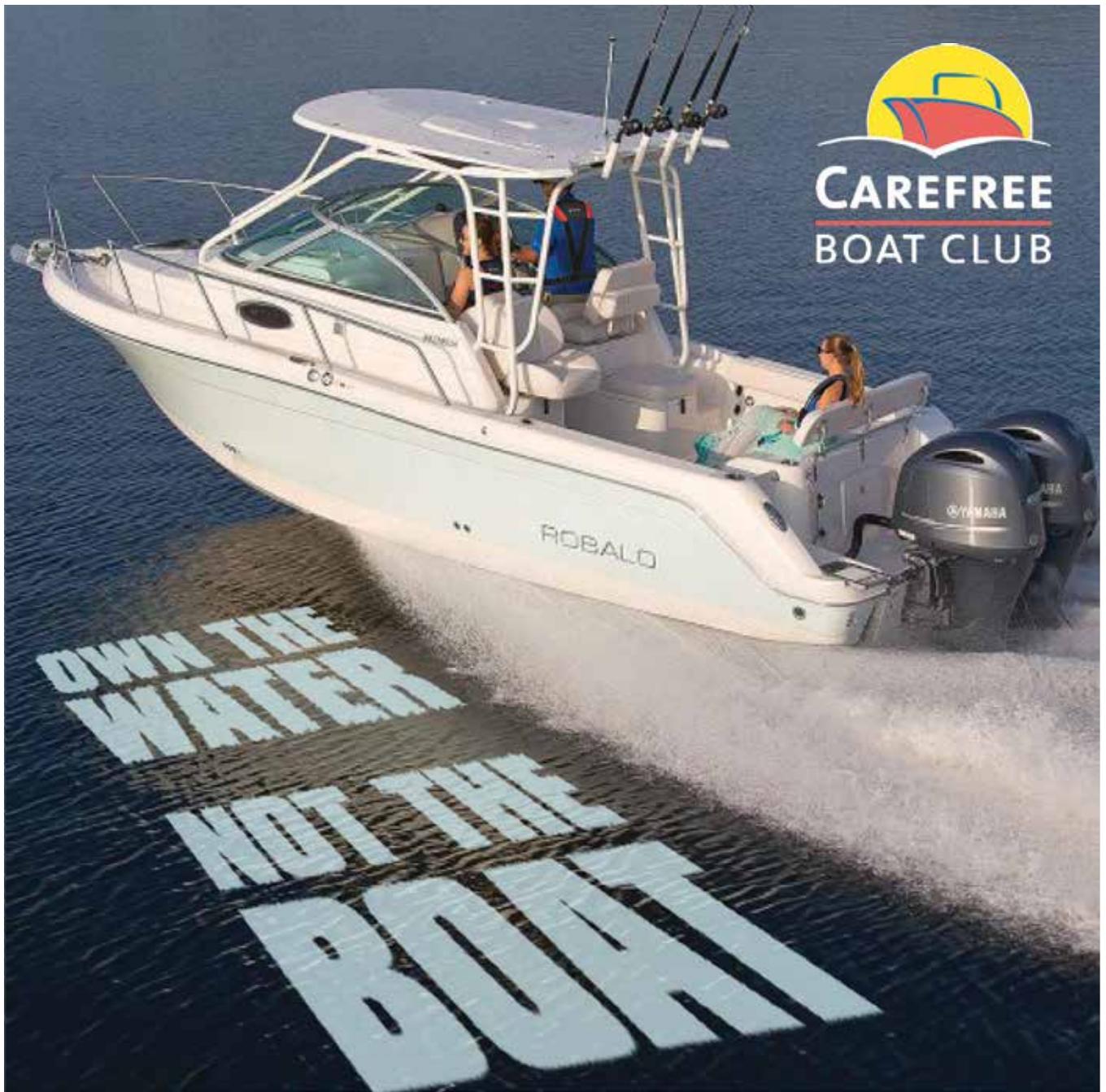
- Pass an approved basic boating course; or
- Pass the DEEP's Equivalency Examination.

**A Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO)** allows an individual to operate any recreational vessel including a personal watercraft. In order to meet the requirements for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO), an individual must:

- Pass an approved combination basic boating/personal watercraft course; or
- Pass an approved basic boating course and an approved 2 1/2 hour personal watercraft course; or
- Pass the DEEP's Equivalency Examination.

*Note: Save the diploma from the course/exam you took for your records. You may need it to apply for your Safe Boating Certificate in person.*

Any person possessing a Safe Boating Certificate (SBC) or a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO) must have the certificate on board at all times while operating a vessel. A



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## CONNECTICUT COASTAL BOATER ENDORSEMENT PROGRAM

Boaters may obtain a Coastal Boater Endorsement for their Safe Boating or Personal Watercraft Certificate by completing a course in coastal navigation. This class is above and beyond what is taught in a basic boating course which provides an introduction to boating safety.

A navigation course is especially critical for coastal boaters. Some topics include longitude/latitude, time, distance, speed calculations, chart plotting, GPS and more. After successful completion the endorsement will be printed on your certificate. For such classes, select Boating Education/Certification/Videos on our website, and click on the Connecticut Coastal Boater Endorsement Program.



PHOTO CREDIT - MARK CHANSKI

certificate is valid for the life of the person to whom it is issued and may be issued regardless of age. (See page 22, Age Restrictions for operating boats with engines greater than 10 horsepower and personal watercraft). The certificate may be suspended upon conviction of operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### PWC only

Any person operating a personal watercraft must possess either a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation issued by Connecticut or a certificate issued by a state with a reciprocal agreement with Connecticut. Connecticut recognizes certificates from MA, NH, NY, and RI for use upon our waters (see page 10, Reciprocity).

### Obtaining a Safe Water Skiing Endorsement

On October 1, 2015, new water skiing laws took effect in Connecticut. In order to operate a vessel or personal watercraft on Connecticut waters that is towing a skier, tube, or has anyone riding the wake of the vessel, you must:

1. Be age 16 or older and
2. Have a valid boating certificate from either Connecticut, a state that has a reciprocal agreement with Connecticut, or (for boats only) a U.S. Coast Guard operator's license and
3. Possess a Connecticut Safe Water skiing Endorsement. Boaters, who obtained one of the above certificates prior to October 1, 2015, do not need to take any action.

The Safe Water skiing Endorsement is now part of all courses leading to a Connecticut boating certificate. Boaters who successfully complete an approved DEEP boating class after October 1, 2015, will automatically receive a Safe Water Skiing Endorsement on their CPWO. Safe Water Skiing Endorsements cannot be issued to boaters holding a temporary SBC or CPWO.

Boaters who obtain a certificate or license from a reciprocal state or the US Coast Guard after October 1, 2015, can obtain a Safe Water skiing Endorsement through an online course and the Sportsmen's Database.

Visit [www.ct.gov/deep/waterskiendorsement](http://www.ct.gov/deep/waterskiendorsement) for

## Boaters! Get Legal In One Day

Connecticut law requires the operator of any registered boat and/or personal watercraft to carry a Connecticut Safe Boating License.

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Instructor, Krista Karch

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Approved by: State of Connecticut • NASBLA • US Coast Guard

additional information regarding the Safe Water Skiing Endorsement and the online course.

## Equivalency Examination

The DEEP's Equivalency Examination is a multiple choice test designed for the experienced boater to qualify for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation. However, the exam may only be attempted once and the DEEP recommends that all boaters take a class to ensure they are up-to-date with current boating laws.

**How do I apply?** Examinations are offered only by the DEEP. Applications to register for the examination are available on the DEEP website or by calling the DEEP Boating Division. The examination fee is \$75.00.

## Purchasing or Printing Duplicate a Boating Certificate (SBC or CPWO)

Connecticut Boating Certificates are now part of the Online Sportsmen Licensing system. Boaters will use this system to purchase or reprint their certificates. If you are new to DEEP Sportsmen Licensing, you will be given a Connecticut Conservation ID number during the registration process. This ID number is a unique number that is assigned to you and will

be used for many of the DEEP products available for online purchasing and/or reprinting.

The Boating Division strongly recommends that you create an account and obtain a Conservation ID number before starting any boating certification course.

To create an account and obtain your Conservation ID number go to <https://ct.aspirafocus.com/InternetSales/>

### ***To obtain a boating certificate***

- Take an approved boating safety course. You will need to provide your instructor/course provider with your Conservation ID number, name (as it was entered when registering for a Conservation ID), and birth date.
- About three days after successfully completing your course, log back onto the Online Sportsmen Licensing System and follow the instructions to purchase your certificate. Currently there is a onetime fee of \$50 for a boating certificate.
- Print your certificate, which is your official document.
- After signing it, you must carry it whenever you operate your vessel.
- You can reprint your certificate at any time by logging back into the system or by visiting a participating license vendor.

## **New for 2020- Aquatic Invasive Species Stamp- Public Act No. 19-190**

Effective January 1, 2020- An Aquatic Invasive Species fee will be added to Connecticut vessel registrations and boaters with out of state registrations must obtain an AIS Stamp prior to boating in inland waters.

### **What is the AIS Stamp?**

A \$5 fee, as indicated on Connecticut vessel registration renewals, to fund invasive species grant projects. The registration validation decal will serve as your AIS stamp.

### **Do out of state registered vessels need an AIS Stamp?**

Anyone intending to operate an out of state registered vessel, on inland waters, must purchase an annual Invasive Species Stamp. Invasive Species Stamps may be purchased through the Sportsmen Licensing System- [www.ct.aspirafocus.com/InternetSales/Sales](http://www.ct.aspirafocus.com/InternetSales/Sales). While on inland Connecticut waters, you are required to carry this document on the vessel.

### **What does this fee go towards?**

Collected funds will go into the Connecticut Lakes, Rivers, and Ponds Preservation account. These funds will be used for projects involving the restoration and rehabilitation of lakes, ponds, and rivers, treatment to control AIS and cyanobacteria, and education and outreach programs to promote AIS awareness and in Connecticut lakes, rivers and ponds.

### **What other ways can I contribute?**

-Follow the Clean, Drain, Dry method, as described on page 52, whenever you are boating.

For more information about the AIS Stamp or invasive species, visit [www.ct.gov/deep/invasivespecies](http://www.ct.gov/deep/invasivespecies)

## **Duplicate Certificate**

You can print a free duplicate certificate at any time by logging onto <https://ct.aspirafocus.com/InternetSales/> (Online Sportsmen Licensing system). Log in using your Date of Birth and Conservation ID number. Select "Click here to reprint your license." This is free of charge. If you cannot find yourself, please contact the Boating Division at 860-434-8638.

## **Temporary Certificate**

If you purchase and register a new or used boat other than a personal watercraft in your name, and do not have a Safe Boating Certificate, you may apply for a Temporary Safe Boating Certificate. It is valid for three months from the date of vessel registration. Within that time, you are encouraged to obtain a permanent Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation.

If you purchase and register a new or used personal watercraft in your name and do not qualify for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation, you may apply for a Temporary Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation after you have taken an approved 2 1/2 hour personal watercraft course. The temporary certificate is valid for three months from the date of vessel registration. Within that time, you are encouraged

to obtain a permanent Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation.

**Where do I apply?** Apply in person at any DEEP Processing Office. See page 4 for locations and hours.

**What do I bring?** For the Temporary Safe Boating Certificate bring your original registration (in your name because the Temporary Certificate is issued to the person whose name is on the registration), a photo ID and a \$50.00 fee. For the Temporary Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation, you additionally need proof of successful completion of an approved 2 1/2 hour personal watercraft course.

**Note: This fee is in addition to your permanent boating certificate and no person shall be issued more than one Temporary Certificate during his or her lifetime.**

## **Approved Boating Courses**

There are two types of DEEP approved basic boating courses offered throughout the state. They are the full eight-hour SBC/CPWO combination course for new boaters and the 2 1/2 hour Personal Watercraft course needed to upgrade to a CPWO from an SBC or obtain a temporary CPWO. DEEP approved courses are offered by the DEEP, non-profit

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organizations and for profit companies. All DEEP approved boating classes must meet the same standards and time requirements regardless of which organization teaches the class.

DEEP sponsored combined basic boating and personal watercraft classes are offered at most community colleges and many other locations around the state. For information concerning the dates, times and locations of DEEP classes, visit our website [www.ct.gov/deep/boatingclass](http://www.ct.gov/deep/boatingclass) or call 860-434-8638.

Note: A list of DEEP approved non-profit and for-profit organizations teaching classes can be found on the website as well.



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## Student Ambassador Program

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection - Boating Division is happy to announce that the Student Ambassador program will be continuing this school year. The Student Ambassador Program provides middle and high school students an opportunity to teach their peers about safe boating. The program may fulfill a senior year or school community project requirement.

Becoming a Student Ambassador is a simple process. Participating schools appoint a maximum of three students to be a DEEP Student Ambassadors for their school, submit their name(s) to the Boating Division, and the Boating Division provides support to the student to successfully complete a boating safety project. Once projects are completed, the Student Ambassador's work is displayed at their school, and the student receives a certificate from the Commissioner of the DEEP.

Launched in 2015, the Student Ambassador's projects were also on display at the Legislative Office Building. Students walk away with a sense of pride for being selected, providing information to their peers and acquire a valuable distinction for their resumes.

For more information and how to participate, contact Jerry Desmond at 860-447-4350 or email to [jerry.desmond@ct.gov](mailto:jerry.desmond@ct.gov).

# CERTIFICATE & EDUCATION

## Boating Education Assistant Program

In 2003, the state stopped charging boaters to park at boat launches after finding it was not cost effective. The Boating Division, instead, invested its resources to provide a valuable service known as the Boating Education Assistant Program.

Boating Education Assistants (BEA) perform the following duties:

- Conduct Vessel Safety Checks;
- Show boaters how to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species;
- Discuss clean boating techniques;
- Encourage boaters to pledge to be Clean Boaters;
- Assist with parking;
- Help keep the launches clean; and
- Provide a friendly face at the launch.

If you encounter one of our BEAs, take them up on their offer for a safety inspection - it could save your life. Pledge to be a Clean Boater and receive a free spill kit. To schedule a safety check, call Jerry Desmond at 860-434-8638.

If you are interested in becoming a BEA, look for open positions posted on the DEEP website in early Spring.

## Useful Forms Available on the [DMV Website](https://portal.ct.gov/DMV)

AU-463 - Motor Vehicle and Vessel Gift Declaration

B58 - Change of Address - For Individuals|For Organizations

B96 - Correction of Information For Vessels

B148 - Vessel Registration Application

B203 - Vessel Ownership Affidavit

B220 - Documents Required for Vessel Registration

B229 - Commercial Fishing Affidavit

H31 - Bill of Sale

J23V - Vessel Copy Records Request

<https://portal.ct.gov/DMV>

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