



COLD WEATHER LIFE JACKET REGULATION EFFECTIVE NOV. 1, 2012



Cold weather life jacket wear is a life-saver!

From now through spring, cold water and air temperatures pose a dangerous threat of cold water shock to boaters who fall overboard. Beginning November 1, 2012, boaters will be required by law to wear a life jacket on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak during the cold weather months from November 1 through April 30. Consistently, on average, almost 70 percent of boating accidents occurring within these cold weather months result in a boating fatality with each accident.



Why do I need to wear a life jacket?

Cold water shock is a major factor in boating fatalities when water temperatures are less than 70 degrees F. Cold water shock causes an involuntary gasp, hyperventilation, breathlessness and a reduced ability to control breathing and swimming. Those wearing a life jacket when exposed to cold water have life-saving

advantages such as insulation from the cold, buoyancy and a reduced risk of aspiration of water.

Why is wearing a life jacket important to waterfowl hunters and anglers?

A disproportionate number of fatalities occur during the months of November through April. Cold water immersion is one of the primary reasons for these fatalities. That's why the chance of a boating accident resulting in a fatality is significantly higher during this time of the year.

Waterfowl hunters in small boats are at a greater risk. Hunters often reach overboard while setting or retrieving decoys or retrieving downed game. Worse, they may stand or move quickly in the heat of the hunt, resulting in an unexpected fall overboard.

Boat stability is also an issue for anglers. Leaning over the side of the boat to net a trophy or standing to fight a fish can quickly capsize a small boat or canoe.

Why does this new regulation also require me to wear my life jacket while at anchor?

The majority of fatalities related to cold water shock occur in small boats, canoes and kayaks. These types of craft are small and unstable, especially when at anchor.

Boat smart! Wear your life jacket year-round!

While this cold weather regulation goes into effect later this year, why not wear your life jacket while boating throughout the year? There are a variety of U. S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets at many different prices. Remember, the cost of a life jacket is a small investment when compared to the value of your life.

Whether in cold weather or warm weather, life jackets save lives.



iBoat
a menu of boating resources
from PFBC
www.fishandboat.com/iboat.htm

For more information on life jacket wear:

www.WearItPennsylvania.com