

BOAT OWNERS AND YOUR PASSENGERS
& FREE VESSEL SAFETY CHECK&
MAY 20, 2016 AT THE RT BREAKFAST MEETING
Placer County Sheriff Marine Patrol Primary and
The USCG Auxiliary Boat Safety Inspectors



This fellow killed a mother and daughter on Englebright Reservoir by running his high speed ski boat over their fishing boat.

What would your family and loved-ones tell you if they knew that you were going fishing in a boat that was unsafe, where you could become injured or worse. Would you fish with a buddy whose boat's safety equipment was not accessible, un-useable, or missing all-together? Are you thinking that you have never had any emergency situations with your boat or in your buddies' boat, so why worry... right? But how about the ski-boat-driver with a belly full of booze driving a boat out of control and smashing into you? Could it happen? Would you, your family or fishing partner, know what to do? Would you be able to help them survive?

Confidence is undermined by one's fallibility to take adequate precautions and be prepared as a boat owner or boat passenger for a worst-case scenario. The Rooster Tails extends a free opportunity to opt on the side of preparedness and to avoid or deal with an emergency since accidents don't always happen to other people.

Here is why you should have a FREE USCG Auxiliary Vessel Safety Check (VSC):

- Of the 39 California boating fatalities in 2014, 59 percent of victims drowned. In those cases where investigators could determine whether a life jacket was used, 96 percent of victims were not wearing a life jacket.
- In 2014, the Coast Guard counted 4,064 accidents that involved 610 deaths, 2,678 injuries and approximately \$39 million dollars of damage to property as a result of recreational boating accidents.
- The fatality rate was 5.2 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels (*good odds, assuming you were not in the 5.2 group*). This rate represents a 10.6% increase from last year's fatality rate of 4.7 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels. Compared to 2013, the number of accidents increased 0.05%, the number of deaths increased 8.9%, and the number of injuries increased 2.2%. Where cause of death was known, 78% of fatal boating accident victims drowned. Of those drowning victims with reported life jacket usage, 84% were not wearing a life jacket.

- Eight out of every ten boaters who drowned were using vessels less than 21 feet in length.
- Operator inattention (*fishing?*), improper lookout, operator inexperience, excessive speed, and alcohol use rank as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents. Alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents; where the primary cause was known, it was listed as the leading factor in 21% of deaths.
- Twelve children under age thirteen lost their lives while boating in 2014. Seven children or approximately 58% died from drowning. Four children or 57% of those who drowned were wearing a life jacket; two were not required to by state law.
- Where data was known, the most common types of vessels involved in reported accidents were open motorboats (47%), personal watercraft (17%), and cabin motorboats (15%). Where data was known, the vessel types with the highest percentage of deaths were open (*fishing?*) motorboats (47%), canoes (13%), and kayaks (10%).
- The 11,804,002 recreational vessels registered by the states in 2014 represent a 1.7% decrease from last year when 12,013,496 recreational vessels were registered.



What's In It For Me?

Boats that pass the USCG Auxiliary safety check are awarded a distinctive **VSC Decal** that alerts the Coast Guard, Marine Patrol, and other law-enforcement agencies that your boat was found to be in full compliance with all Federal and California boating laws. Frequently, such agencies will not detain boats displaying a current-year-decal that are otherwise operating safely.

What If My Boat Doesn't Pass?

If your boat does not pass a VSC, no report is filed. Instead, you are provided a written report that aids you in correcting any discrepancies noted. Often, a quick trip to the local marine supply store is all that is necessary to obtain missing safety items and easily pass a re-inspection. And if you show your examiner-signed VSC report, you may receive a discount on your missing or discrepant items.

Why Take Advantage of Rooster Tails Free VSC?

In a word – **safety**. You are left with the peace of mind that your boat meets minimum safety standards and that in an emergency, you will have the necessary equipment to save lives and summon help. **Finally, your insurance rates may be lowered – check with your agent.** And remember, no vessel is too large or too small to be safe – and in compliance. Your fishing buddies, family, friends, and fellow boaters will thank you!

Safety On The Water Is Your Responsibility!

The **Vessel Safety Check (VSC)** program is a great way to make sure that you and your boat are ready for the fishing season. During a VSC, a certified **Vessel Examiner (VE)** will not only inspect the safety equipment aboard your boat, but also explain its use as well as care and maintenance in a personal one-on-one manner that is very productive and rewarding. VSCs are a great opportunity to ensure that you become a safer boater both in terms of your equipment and knowing how to use it.

During a **Vessel Safety Check**, you can talk with a Vessel Examiner, about the use of marine safety equipment and ask boating-related safety questions. You will receive an evaluation form showing missing equipment and safety problems, a **10% discount on safety equipment** may be available at West Marine stores, if you show them the coupon your VSC examiner gave you.

A Vessel Safety Check is not a law-enforcement operation: no citations, fines, or reporting to agencies is ever done. It is a FREE education service for recreational boaters to help you with getting your boat ready for the season!

15 Reasons a Vessel Might Not Pass a Vessel Safety Check (VSC)

The following represents a sampling of 10,0650 boats that were Vessel Safety Checked:

74.873% Passed the VSC and received a decal

25.127% Did not meet VSC requirements and were given recommendations for compliance to marine laws

Some common items that caused your boat not to receive a VSC decal: (Note: This is a percentage of ALL vessels examined and some had two or more items that failed so these numbers will not add up to 100%.)

Display of Numbers - 5.435%

Registration Documentation - 5.574%

Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) - 2.832%

Visual Distress Signals - 12.221%

Fire Extinguishers - 4.501%

Motor Ventilation - 1.451%

Motor Backfire Flame Control - 1.639%

Distress Sound Producing Devices - 5.156%

Navigation Lights - 8.465%

Overall Vessel Condition - 4.670%

Recommended items, but not required to receive a VSC Decal:

Marine Radio

Dewatering Device (for bailing water)

Easy Access Mounted Fire Extinguishers

Anchor & Line

First Aid Kit

Capacity Compliance

Optional Items to Discuss with vessel examiner:

Accident Reporting Form

Survival Tips

Dock Fueling Tips

Float Plan and Weather & Sea Conditions

Insurance documentation

Boating Check List