

---

# Presidential Documents

---

Title 3—

Proclamation 7198 of May 20, 1999

The President

National Safe Boating Week, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

## A Proclamation

In America, a country bordered by oceans and blessed with numerous lakes and rivers, recreational boating enjoys a long and proud tradition. From generation to generation, families pass on their appreciation of the water and share the pleasures of nature's beauty and bounty. Annually, more than 74 million Americans take part in recreational boating activities with their families and friends.

While boating is a wonderful form of recreation, it can also present many dangers. Human error and poor judgment contribute to most recreational boating accidents. Recent statistics indicate that 86 percent of all boating accidents are attributable to operator-controlled factors, such as excessive speed, inattention, failure to follow required navigation rules and practices, and lack of knowledge about boats and the boating environment.

Even with adequate training and preparation, boaters can still have accidents. That is why it is crucial for everyone using our waterways to wear a life jacket. Recent U.S. Coast Guard statistics indicate that 90 percent of drowning victims were not wearing life preservers. Most of the victims were small boat users—many in remote areas. In such potentially dangerous circumstances, wearing a life jacket is essential. This message is so important that the National Safe Boating Campaign theme for the second year is "Boat Smart from the Start! Wear Your Life Jacket!"

Many recreational boating organizations, including the National Safe Boating Council and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, as well as the U.S. Coast Guard, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments continue to help save lives by reminding us of the importance of wearing life preservers and following safe navigation rules. However, each individual must take responsibility for his or her personal safety and for the well-being of family and friends. By taking appropriate precautions, we can all enjoy our Nation's waterways safely and securely.

In recognition of the importance of safe boating practices, the Congress, by joint resolution approved June 4, 1958 (36 U.S.C. 131), as amended, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim annually the 7-day period ending on the last Friday before Memorial Day as "National Safe Boating Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22 through 28, 1999, as National Safe Boating Week. I encourage the governors of the 50 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to join in observing this occasion and to urge all Americans to practice safe boating habits not only during this week, but also throughout the year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

*William Clinton*

[FR Doc. 99-13324

Filed 5-21-99; 9:41 am]

Billing code 3195-01-P