

Emergency Tips for Powerboaters

Avoid the following major causes of boating accidents:

- Poor trim, overpowering, or overloading beyond the load capacity on the certification plate.
- Failure to notice obstacles, boats, and people.
- Standing up in a moving boat.
- Heading out in rough weather, or when rough weather is approaching.
- Riding low on the bow or turning too fast.
- Leaky fuel system.
- Going too far offshore.

In the event that you should capsize:

- Have all passengers put on a personal flotation device (PFD).
- Signal for help using any means possible, such as distress signals.
- Stay with the boat.

If someone falls overboard:

- Yell "MAN OVERBOARD" in a loud voice.
- Point to the victim. Do not lose sight of him/her.
- Throw the victim a PFD or anything else that can provide flotation.
- Approach cautiously and turn the engine off when close by.
- If you absolutely must enter the water, do so while wearing a PFD and a safety line attached to the boat.
- Treat the victim for hypothermia, drowning, and/or shock as necessary.

If you get caught in a storm:

- Slow down.
- Make sure everyone is wearing a PFD and that the straps are fastened.
- Keep the bow into the seas and turn only during lulls.
- Proceed cautiously to the nearest anchorage.
- Plan ahead and be ready to use your anchor and distress signals in an emergency.
- Avoid dangerous situations by listening to local weather reports and staying on the mainland if conditions look bad.

Should you witness or be involved in an accident on the water, you are legally required to provide help without exposing yourself to danger. You must also report any damage or injuries to the proper authorities.