

# PROCLAMATION

Americans are increasingly heading to the water for recreation and relaxation as opportunities for on-the-water activities grow each year. But with this growth comes additional responsibility. It is vital that both novice and experienced boaters alike practice safe boating habits – especially wearing life jackets. Approximately 80 percent of the people who died in boating accidents in 1994 were not wearing life jackets.

When you leave for a day of boating, you seldom expect to end up in the water. But if you do, and are not wearing a life jacket, you greatly increase your chances of becoming a boating statistic.

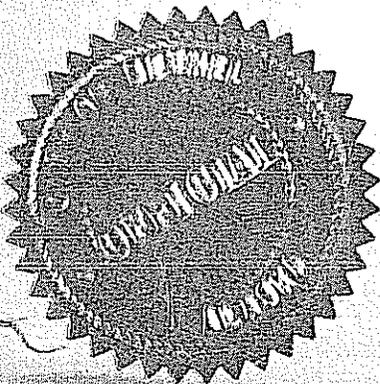
Whereas, in recognizing that hundreds of lives could be saved each year by wearing life jackets and that the life jackets of today are more comfortable, more attractive and more wearable than the styles of years past, and

Whereas, the law requires that wearable life jackets be carried for each person on board the boat and that children under 13 must wear their jackets,

Now, therefore, I hereby support the goals of the National Safe Boating Campaign and proclaim May 18-24 as

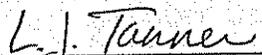
## NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK

and the start of the year-round effort to promote safe boating.



  
Ruth M. Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
L.J. Tanner, City Clerk

## ALASKA BOATING STATISTICS

In 1992, the most recent year for which statistics are available, 13 people died in Alaska's waters as a result of recreational boating accidents. Although this is a significant decline from 1991 when 29 boaters died, the rate is still 5.5 times the national average.

The comparison is based on a national average of 4 deaths per 100,000 boats, taking into account both registered boats and estimated unregistered vessels. The following examples illustrate the difference between Alaska and two other states. Virginia in 1992 also had 13 fatalities, but had 206,369 registered boats (about 7 times the number registered in Alaska). Rhode Island, with about the same number of registered boats as Alaska, had only 4 deaths in 1992.

The numbers below reflect only the reported recreational boating accidents, injuries and deaths; many accidents go unreported and these numbers do not include commercial fishing and other non-recreational marine accidents/deaths.

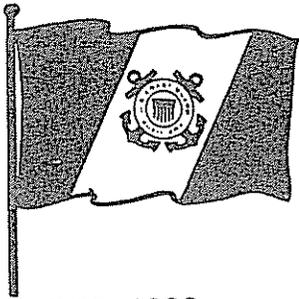
	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>
Boats registered	31,800	32,331
Vessels involved in accidents	53	37*
Reported accidents	44	30
No. of those with fatalities	21	9
Total deaths	29	13
Total injuries	11	13
Total property damage	\$738,500	\$282,400

\* Types of accidents: 14 collisions with other vessels; 5 sinkings; 4 capsizings; 4 groundings; 3 falls overboard; 2 fire/explosions; 2 floodings; 2 collisions with other objects and 1 unknown/other circumstances.

### ALASKA FATALITIES 1989 - 1992

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL ACCIDENTS</u>	<u>FATAL ACCIDENTS</u>	<u>DEATHS</u>	<u>ALCOHOL INVOLVED</u>
1989	35	29	37	7
1990	34	18	21	3
1991	44	21	29	8
1992	30	9	13	0

SOURCE: Director of Auxiliary, 17th Coast Guard District and COMDTPUB P16754.6, "Boating Statistics 1992"



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
**UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY**  
(AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS 1939)  
THE CIVILIAN COMPONENT OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD

April 22, 1996

The Honorable Ruth Richardson  
Mayor, City of Bethel  
P. O. Box 388  
Bethel, Alaska 99559

Dear Mayor Richardson

National Safe Boating Week is May 18-25, just in time to remind Alaska's boaters to navigate safely this summer. The theme for 1996 is "**Life Jackets. They float. You Don't.**"

Alaska has a very poor safety record in recreational boating. In 1994, the latest year for which statistics are available, **18 Alaskans died in recreational boating accidents**. Ten others were injured. Nationally, there were 784 deaths and 4,084 reported injuries from a record-setting 6,906 accidents. In nearly 80 percent of the accidents, the victims were not wearing life jackets.

As public affairs officer for the 17th District, U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, I and National Safe Boating Week chairman, Pat Fairbanks, are encouraging civic leaders to issue proclamations for Safe Boating Week.

The enclosed sample proclamation is for your consideration. If you elect to proclaim **Safe Boating Week in Bethel**, you will be joining mayors across the nation and throughout Alaska in urging boaters to become safer, more knowledgeable users of our waterways.

If you decide to participate, I ask that you consider making a public announcement of the proclamation and submitting your proclamation to the news media in your area. (And, if it's not too inconvenient, I would like a copy of your proclamation.)

Please let me (694-3570) or Pat (563-7049) know if you need any boating safety information or other assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doris Thomas".

Doris Thomas  
District Staff Officer for Public Affairs  
17th District, U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

ADDRESS: 16422 Marcus St.  
Eagle River, AK 99577