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A digest of boating laws and regulations
Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

State of Connecticut
Ned Lamont, Governor

Department of Energy &
Environmental Protection
Robert Klee, Commissioner
Susan Whalen, Deputy Commissioner
Michael Lambert, Bureau Chief

The Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, providing programs and services in a fair and impartial manner. In conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, DEEP makes every effort to provide equally effective services for persons with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities needing auxiliary aids or services, or information by voice or TTY/TDD, should call 860-424-3000.

This guide is intended to provide a summary of the most pertinent laws and regulations concerning boating, and to provide information on these opportunities in Connecticut. No attempt has been made to employ the exact wording of laws and regulations, nor to provide their complete listing. For legal purposes the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and the General Statutes of Connecticut must be consulted. A listing of the General Statutes of Connecticut can be found on the Connecticut General Assembly website at www.cga.ct.gov. Information when you call: (1) the registration number of the violator, (2) the violation, (3) the date, time, location, and (4) your name and address.

You can report violations of boating laws and regulations to Emergency Communications. Include the following information when you call: (1) the registration number of the violator, (2) the violation, (3) the date, time, location, and (4) your name and address.

Administration (Hartford) 860-424-3012
Eastern District (Marlborough)
East of CT River & Middlesex County 860-295-9523
Marine District (Old Lyme)
Connecticut shoreline towns 860-434-0316
Western District (Harwinton)
West of Connecticut River 860-485-0226

DEEP PROCESSING OFFICES:
DEEP Eastern District Headquarters,
209 Hebron Rd., Marlborough, CT 06447
(Boating certificates processed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) 860-295-9523, 8:30–4 pm
DEEP Licensing & Revenue,
79 Elm St., Hartford, CT 06106-5127
860-424-3105, M–F, 9–4 pm

DEEP Marine Headquarters,
333 Ferry Rd., Old Lyme, CT 06371
860-434-8638 M–F, 8–4 pm
DEEP Western District Headquarters,
230 Plymouth Rd., Harwinton, CT 06791
860-485-0226 M–F, 8:30–4 pm

OTHER DEEP SERVICES:
DEEP Spill Information 866-337-7745
DEEP Land and Water Resources Division
(Harbor/Harbormaster Information, Mooring and Dock Permits), 860-424-3034
DEEP Fisheries Division (Inland) 860-424-3474
(Marine) 860-434-6043
DEEP Store (Maps and Publications) 860-424-3555
DEEP State Parks Division 860-424-3200
DEEP Wildlife Division 860-424-3011
National Response Center Sewage Spills 800-424-8802

OTHER AGENCIES:
United States Coast Guard (USCG)
(Marine Radio VHF Channel 16)
USCG Sector Long Island Sound 203-468-4401
USCG Station Eaton’s Neck (NY) 631-281-8959
USCG Station New Haven (CT) 203-468-4498
USCG Station New London (CT) 860-442-4471

Department of Motor Vehicles
(Vessel Registration Information) 860-263-5718
Department of Revenue Services
(Boat Sales & Use Tax Information) 860-297-5962
Office of Secretary of the State
(Vessel Lien Information) 860-509-6004

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DEEP Website: www.ct.gov/deep   •   FAX: 860-434-3501   •   DEEP Boating Website: www.ct.gov/deep/boating

About this Guide
Welcome to the 2019 Connecticut Boater’s Guide. This joint venture between the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection and Turley Custom Media opens many new doors.

Turley Custom Media, a division of Turley Publications, Inc., a multi-faceted printing company, works to bring creative solutions to expand your audience. Turley Custom Media supports CTDEEP with the design, layout and editing of the Connecticut Boater’s Guide, while managing the marketing and advertising sales to companies and organizations relevant to you, the reader.

Advertising revenue not only generates savings, it also lowers production costs, allowing CTDEEP to focus funding on what really matters – keeping Connecticut’s waterways safe, clean and fun for all boaters!

We welcome your feedback or advertising interests. Please contact us at 800-824-6548 or ctboaters@turley.com.
Dear Boater,

Connecticut offers some of the most diverse boating opportunities in the country. With access to hundreds of miles of Long Island Sound coastline, numerous inland ponds and lakes, and whitewater and flatwater rivers, Connecticut can support virtually any water-based recreation opportunity imaginable. To make the best of your boating adventure, we ask that you practice safe boating techniques by wearing a life jacket, carrying the proper safety equipment, and never boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The Boating Division of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) likes to say, “boating is serious fun,” and encourages all boaters to take advantage of the many opportunities to enhance their safety and enjoyment while boating in Connecticut. A safe, educated and responsible boater increases the level of safety for themselves and everyone on and around our waters.

The DEEP boating staff and volunteers are dedicated to making your experience on our waters the best it can be by providing boating education classes, courtesy vessel safety checks, and educating boaters about environmentally clean and safe boating practices, and aquatic invasive species.

The annual Boater’s Guide includes a summary of Connecticut boating laws, information about required safety equipment and lists the boat launches and pumpout facilities located throughout Connecticut.

Boating in Connecticut can create memories that last a lifetime. We wish you and your family a fun-filled and safe boating season.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Klee
Commissioner

79 Elm Street • Hartford, CT 06106-5127
www.ct.gov/deep
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2019 CONNECTICUT BOATERS GUIDE
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In most cases, Connecticut requires boat operators to obtain education and certification. This section will describe what is required.

**Boats other than Personal Watercraft**

Residents of Connecticut, persons owning real property in Connecticut, or persons with vessels registered in Connecticut must have either a Safe Boating Certificate or a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation to legally operate any boat with a motor, or a unmotorized sailboat 19 1/2 feet in length or longer.

**Exceptions:**
- On inland waters of this state with a 10 horsepower limit and between one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset,

---

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Dedicated to the boating community since 1936, the Gardella family and their fine crew have a complete understanding of the needs and interests of boating enthusiasts. With a strong commitment to clients, Rex provides an extensive variety of services from their impressive location on Long Island Sound.

Rex Marine Center (RexMarine.com) is the all-encompassing boating resource for the seasoned boater as well as beginners new to the water. Rex truly has “Everything for Boating”. Offering new boats by Tidewater and Formula as well as pre-owned boats, factory-trained technicians for expert servicing of all boats up to 50’, indoor and outdoor winter storage, summer dockage, and Valet Rack Service. Rex also has the area’s best Marine supplies store and Parts Dept., the latest electronics, and a large selection of Mercury and Zodiac Inflatable Boats. Rex is also a dealer for Mercury and Yamaha Outboard Motors, and for Formula Boats & Yachts. You will not find a more helpful, friendly, knowledgeable crew anywhere.

The Rex Boating Club (RexBoatingClub.com) is the Ownership Alternative that offers you the opportunity to have a fleet of top quality 23’ to 27’ bowrider and center-console boats at your disposal. The boats are always clean and fueled, waiting for you to turn-the-key and hit the water. At a fraction of the cost of ownership, BBC membership includes a Safe Boating class and private on-water orientation with a licensed Captain. Established in 2005, the Club enables you to enjoy the best of boating and is especially helpful if you are considering buying a boat and want on-water experience to help you make the best choice.

When you are ready to buy that boat, your friends at Rex will make it easy. Located at 144 Water Street in South Norwalk, CT. Rex Marine Center and the Rex Boating Club are dedicated to giving you the best boating experience on beautiful Long Island Sound. With decades of know-how and a passion for helping you enjoy your times on the water, Rex Marine Center and the Rex Boating Club truly are your friends in the boating business. We help you connect with those you care about!

For more Rex Marine Center information, call 203-866-5555. The Rex Boating Club can be reached by contacting Founder and managing member Bill Gardella at 203-984-1278.
no certificate is required for a person operating an electric motor (rated at 106 lbs. of thrust or less). However, the vessel must be registered.

- A person who has a valid operator’s license issued by the United States Coast Guard does not require a Safe Boating Certificate to operate a vessel other than a personal watercraft. They must have the original license on board the recreational vessel on which they are operating.

**Non-Resident Certificate Requirements**

Connecticut recognizes a valid Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation for operating a personal watercraft that is issued by a reciprocal state (NY, MA, RI or NH) for a non resident even if they own real property in CT. Once a person holding a certificate from a reciprocal state makes CT their permanent residence, he or she must obtain a CT boating certificate within 90 days of becoming a CT resident.

Personal watercraft operators MUST have a recognized Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation to operate legally.

**Reciprocity**

The Connecticut Safe Boating Certificate and the Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation are accepted in many states. Connecticut recognizes on our waters, certificates from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Rhode Island and is expanding our reciprocity with other states (check our website updates). If you are boating in another state, check with that state first. Adherence to Connecticut state law remains the responsibility of the boater.

New Connecticut residents: Any person changing their residence from a reciprocal state to Connecticut may use their reciprocal boating certificate in Connecticut for only 90 days after becoming a resident. Any time during those 90 days that person may use their certificate as evidence that they meet Connecticut’s boating education requirement, and may purchase a Connecticut boating certificate.

**Safe Boating Certificate or Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation**

A Safe Boating Certificate (SBC) will allow an individual to operate any recreational vessel, except a personal watercraft on Connecticut’s waters. In order to meet the requirements for a Safe Boating Certificate (SBC), an individual must:

- Pass an approved basic boating course; or
- Pass the DEEP’s Equivalency Examination.

A Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation
Carefree Boat Club of Southern CT provides its members unlimited access to a variety of top of the line boats. With none of the hassles of boat ownership, Carefree offers an affordable way to indulge in the boating lifestyle. Simply make a reservation and enjoy the water, we take care of everything else.

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Connecticut Coastal Boater Endorsement Program

Boaters may obtain a Coastal Boater Endorsement for their Safe Boating or Personal Watercraft Certificate by completing a course in coastal navigation. This class is above and beyond what is taught in a basic boating course which provides an introduction to boating safety. A navigation course is especially critical for coastal boaters. Some topics include Longitude/Latitude, time, distance, speed calculations, chart plotting, GPS and more. After successful completion the endorsement will be printed on your certificate. For such classes, select Boating Education/Certification/Videos on our website, and click on the Connecticut Coastal Boater Endorsement Program.

(CPWO) allows an individual to operate any recreational vessel including a personal watercraft. In order to meet the requirements for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO), an individual must:

- Pass an approved combination basic boating/personal watercraft course; or
- Pass an approved basic boating course and an approved 2 1/2 hour personal watercraft course; or
- Pass the DEEP’s Equivalency Examination.

Note: Save the diploma from the course/exam you took for your records. You may need it to apply for your Safe Boating Certificate in person.

Any person possessing a Safe Boating Certificate (SBC) or a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO) must have the certificate on board at all times while operating a vessel. A certificate is valid for the life of the person to whom it is issued and may be issued regardless of age. (See page 22, Age Restrictions for operating boats with engines greater than 10 horsepower and personal watercraft). The certificate may be suspended upon conviction of operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

PWC only

Any person operating a personal watercraft must possess either a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation issued by Connecticut or a certificate issued by a state with a reciprocal agreement with Connecticut. Connecticut recognizes certificates from MA, NH, NY, and RI for use upon our waters (see page 10, Reciprocity).

Obtaining a Safe Water Skiing Endorsement

On October 15, 2015, new water skiing laws took effect in Connecticut. In order to operate a vessel or personal watercraft on Connecticut waters that is towing a skier, tube, or has anyone riding the wake of the vessel, you must:

1- Be age 16 or older and
2- Have a valid boating certificate from either Connecticut, a state that has a reciprocal agreement

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with Connecticut, or (for boats only) a U.S. Coast Guard operator’s license and
3- Possess a Connecticut Safe Waterskiing Endorsement. Boaters, who obtained one of the above certificates prior to October 1, 2015, do not need to take any action.

The Safe Water skiing Endorsement is now part of all courses leading to a Connecticut boating certificate. Boaters who successfully complete an approved DEEP boating class after October 1, 2015, will automatically receive a Safe Waterskiing Endorsement on their CPWO. Safe Waterski Endorsements cannot be issued to boaters holding a temporary SBC or CPWO.

Boaters who obtain a certificate or license from a reciprocal state or the US Coast Guard after October 1, 2015, can obtain a Safe Waterskiing Endorsement through an online course and the Sportsmen’s Database.

Visit www.ct.gov/deep/waterskiendorsement for additional information regarding the Safe Waterskiing Endorsement and the online course.

Equivalency Examination

The DEEP’s Equivalency Examination is a multiple choice test designed for the experienced boater to qualify for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation. However, the exam may only be attempted once and the DEEP recommends that all boaters take a class to ensure they are up-to-date with current boating laws.

How do I apply? Examinations are offered only by the DEEP. Applications to register for the examination are available on the DEEP website or by calling the DEEP Boating Division. The examination fee is $75.00.

Purchasing or Printing Duplicate a Boating Certificate (SBC or CPWO)

Connecticut Boating Certificates are now part of the Online Sportsmen Licensing system. Boaters will use this system to purchase or reprint their certificates. If you are new to DEEP Sportsmen Licensing, you will be given a Connecticut Conservation ID number during the registration process. This ID number is a unique number that is assigned to you and will be used for many of the DEEP products available for online purchasing and/or reprinting.

The Boating Division strongly recommends that you create an account and obtain a Conservation ID number before starting any boating certification course.

To create an account and obtain your Conservation ID number go to www.ct.gov/deep/sportsmenlicensing

To Obtain a boating certificate

• Take an approved boating safety course. You will need to provide your instructor/course provider with your Conservation ID number, name (as it was entered when registering for a Conservation ID), and birth date.
• About three days after successfully completing your course, log back onto the Online Sportsmen Licensing System and follow the instructions to purchase your
C E R T I F I C A T E & E D U C A T I O N

Certificate. Currently there is a one-time fee of $50 for a boating certificate.

- Print your certificate, which is your official document.
- After signing it, you must carry it whenever you operate your vessel.
- You can reprint your certificate at any time by logging back into the system or by visiting a participating license vendor.

**Duplicate Certificate**

You can print a free duplicate certificate at any time by logging onto [www.ct.gov/deep/sportsmenlicensing](http://www.ct.gov/deep/sportsmenlicensing) (Online Sportsmen Licensing System). Log in using your Date of Birth and Conservation ID number. Select “Click here to reprint your license.” This is free of charge. If you cannot find yourself, please contact the Boating Division at 860-434-8638.

**Temporary Certificate**

If you purchase and register a new or used boat other than a personal watercraft in your name, and do not have a Safe Boating Certificate, you may apply for a Temporary Safe Boating Certificate. It is valid for three months from the date of vessel registration. Within that time, you are encouraged to obtain a permanent Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation.

If you purchase and register a new or used personal watercraft in your name and do not qualify for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation, you may apply for a Temporary Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation after you have taken an approved 2 1/2 hour personal watercraft course. The temporary certificate is valid for three months from the date of vessel registration. Within that time, you are encouraged to obtain a permanent Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation.

**Where do I apply?** Apply in person at any DEEP Processing Office. See page 4 for locations and hours.

**What do I bring?** For the Temporary Safe Boating Certificate bring your original registration (in your name because the Temporary Certificate is issued to the person whose name is on the registration), a photo ID and a $50.00 fee. For the Temporary Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation, you additionally need proof of successful course.

---

If you can't wait to get out on the water and want to attend an outstanding licensing class consider Connecticut Boating Certificates, LLC.

With a background in public speaking, founder Glenn Dean's approach strives to make his classes engaging and informative. “We focus on audience participation and adding a touch of wit helps to set the classes at Connecticut Boating Certificates apart from the others. Building confidence while teaching the material is the priority and the hundreds of testimonials from students truly speak for themselves. After all, it's our job to provide students with the knowledge that they need to hit the open water with their new boating license. We have worked hard to create a course that keeps our students interacting, engaged, and involved. The test results show our students learn and retain all of the pertinent information. Most importantly, according to our surveys, 99.4 percent of our students said the class went by at a great pace, fast, or really fast!”

"It's not just about passing a test. It's about embracing the material and developing the PROPER MINDSET regarding boating," explains Glenn. "We tell the students frequently, 'Don't focus on the exam, focus on what we're talking about...we'll prep you for the exam.' While the class may end after students pass the exam, the support does not as you are now a lifetime client with us and we are always available to offer help and answer any questions that our clients may have."

All participants attending the course receive an 80 page full-color Boating Course Booklet, as well as a parting gift. Students will then have access to a private, clients only section of our website with over 1500 pages of information including books, publications, nautical information, and digital charts of Long Island Sound. We have also added videos from the DEEP links to important web sites like NOAA, the United States Coast Guard and many others. New this year is the Instructors Blog which includes re-caps of the more difficult concepts taught during the class.

In addition to the Public Licensing Classes, Connecticut Boating Certificates offers Private Licensing Classes (in Home) and the official Coastal Boater Navigation Endorsement Course. Hands on lessons will become available during the upcoming 2019 season.

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All participants attending the course receive an 80 page full-color Boating Course Booklet, as well as a parting gift. Students will then have access to a private, clients only section of our website with over 1500 pages of information including books, publications, nautical information, and digital charts of Long Island Sound. We have also added videos from the DEEP links to important web sites like NOAA, the United States Coast Guard and many others. New this year is the Instructors Blog which includes re-caps of the more difficult concepts taught during the class.

In addition to the Public Licensing Classes, Connecticut Boating Certificates offers Private Licensing Classes (in Home) and the official Coastal Boater Navigation Endorsement Course. Hands on lessons will become available during the upcoming 2019 season.

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If you can't wait to get out on the water and want to attend an outstanding licensing class consider Connecticut Boating Certificates, LLC.

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On June 11, 1911, a small group of men met in a temporary building on Carroll Avenue for the purpose of organizing a new yacht club. Their objective was to provide a suitable clubhouse, grounds, and anchorage for the convenience of its members. In order to further encourage boating in all its forms, promote social recreation, and interaction between its members, the Club was later organized on May 21, 1912, known as the East End Yacht Club, Inc.

Our Auxiliary was formed in 1955 to “aid and assist the East End Yacht Club.” It is a GREAT WAY to meet new friends and participate in bettering our Club!

Over the years we have maintained our docks which offer power and water for our boaters and visitors.

We offer a safe boating course each spring, a variety of fishing tournaments, an annual golf tournament, and a car show.

Our entertainment committee, along with our auxiliary, offer a variety of special events, and social activities keeping in the tradition of the club to bring together boating and fun!

If you are interested in becoming a member, please call Russ at 203-690-2921 or Kevin at 203-878-5834, in the evenings, for more information.

A certified DEEP safe boating course is available in the spring for all club members and their family. Club members and family get a discount from the normal price of the boating class.

Affordable Rates
On-site Galley
Pasta Night
Friday Night Dinners
Club Parties

Annual Car Show
Fishing Tournaments
Commodores Dinner Dance
Informational Website
Facebook Page

You can also reach us on East End Yacht Club
completion of an approved 2 1/2 hour personal watercraft course.

Note: This fee is in addition to your permanent boating certificate and no person shall be issued more than one Temporary Certificate during his or her lifetime.

Approved Boating Courses
There are two types of DEEP approved basic boating courses offered throughout the state. They are the full eight-hour SBC/CPWO combination course for new boaters and the 2 1/2 hour Personal Watercraft course needed

Student Ambassador Program
The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection - Boating Division is happy to announce that the Student Ambassador program will be continuing this school year. The Student Ambassador Program provides middle and high school students an opportunity to teach their peers about safe boating. The program may fulfill a senior year or school community project requirement.

Becoming a Student Ambassador is a simple process. Participating schools appoint a maximum of three students to be a DEEP Student Ambassador for their school, submit their name(s) to the Boating Division, and the Boating Division provides support to the student to successfully complete a boating safety project. Once projects are completed, the Student Ambassador’s work is displayed at their school, and the student receives a certificate from the Commissioner of the DEEP for their work.

Launched in 2015, the Student Ambassador’s projects were also on display at the Legislative Office Building. Students walk away with a sense of pride for being selected, providing information to their peers and will acquire a valuable distinction for their resumes.

For more information and how to participate, contact Jerry Desmond at 860-447-4350 or email to jerry.desmond@ct.gov.
to upgrade to a CPWO from an SBC or obtain a temporary CPWO. DEEP approved courses are offered by the DEEP, non-profit organizations and for profit companies. All DEEP approved boating classes must meet the same standards and time requirements regardless of which organization teaches the class.

DEEP sponsored combined basic boating and personal watercraft classes are offered at most community colleges and many other locations around the state. For information concerning the dates, times and locations of DEEP the classes, visit our website, [www.ct.gov/deep/boatingclass](http://www.ct.gov/deep/boatingclass) or call 860-434-8638. (Note: A list of DEEP approved non-profit and for-profit organizations teaching classes can be found on the website as well.)

**Boating Education Assistant Program**

In 2003, the state stopped charging boaters to park at boat launches after finding it was not cost effective. The Boating Division, instead, invested its resources to provide a valuable service known as the Boating Education Assistant Program.

Boating Education Assistants (BEA) perform the following duties:

- Conduct Vessel Safety Checks;
- Show boaters how to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species;
- Discuss clean boating techniques;
- Encourage boaters to pledge to be Clean Boaters;
- Assist with parking;
- Help keep the launches clean; and
- Provide a friendly face at the launch.

If you encounter one of our BEAs, take them up on their offer for a safety inspection - it could save your life. Pledge to be a Clean Boater and receive a free spill kit. To schedule a safety check, call Jerry Desmond at 860-434-8638.