



Boating in Suffolk County NY? PLEASE READ THIS

New boating education requirements for residents take effect 11/6/13

The Suffolk County Legislature recently passed a law which requires all residents 18 and older operating most recreational boats to take an approved boater safety course, pass an exam, and carry a boating safety certificate while boating in Suffolk County. This is an additional county requirement on top of existing NY state boater education laws, which remain in force. Suffolk County boaters need to be certified by November 6, 2013.

Who has to meet this requirement?

All Suffolk County residents 18 and older at the helm of a recreational boat in Suffolk County need to carry a boating safety certificate. New York boaters who are residents of other counties and out-of-state boaters are exempt from this new law and can operate boats anywhere in New York including Suffolk County without a boating safety certificate. However, they are still subject to all other New York state boating laws (see below.)



What boats are included or exempt?

Most recreational boats are included in the County's requirement. Rowboats, canoes, kayaks, and crew racing skulls are exempt from the county boating education requirements. These boaters do not need to carry the boating safety certificate.

What courses satisfy this new County requirement and how much do they cost?

For adult (18 and older) boaters other than operators of personal water craft (PWCs) the course must meet National Association of Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) standards and you can take the course online or in a classroom. Expect to spend 4-8 hours to successfully complete the course and exam.

BoatU.S. offers a free online course accessible at all hours. Once you have completed and passed the course, you can print out your boating safety certificate.

Visit www.boatus.org to enroll in the course.

There are other NASBLA approved online courses available for a fee. If you'd rather learn in a classroom, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, the U.S. Power Squadrons, and others offer courses for costs generally ranging from \$40 to \$100. Please visit www.boatus.com/courseline/ for a list of local classes.

If I drive a PWC like a Waverunner, Jetski or Seadoo, what is different, what courses work for me?

New York State law requires all operators of PWCs to obtain a boating safety certificate via an 8-hour classroom boating safety course and pass a proctored exam. This means online courses are unacceptable for PWC operators anywhere in New York, including in Suffolk County. For approved course times and locations:

www.nysparks.com/recreation/boating/safety-courses.aspx

continued on back

What about kids?

The new Suffolk County law does not apply to youth under 18 years of age. However, NY state law requires boat operators age 10 to 18 to complete a classroom course with a proctored exam to obtain a boating safety certificate.

What does this do to my 2013 summer season?

Nothing! The county law takes effect November 6, 2013.

How does this work with the New York State boating laws?

This law ONLY applies to Suffolk County Residents who operate certain boats and is in addition to all current New York State and federal boating laws. A user-friendly brochure of all applicable state and federal boating requirements can be found at:

www.nysparks.com/recreation/boating/documents/NYSBoatersGuide.pdf

New York State Boat Operator Laws

Children Under 10 years old: Under current New York state law, this boater may operate a pleasure vessel without a boating safety certificate as long as they are under direct supervision by a person over the age of 18.

10-18 years old: Under NY State Law, youth may only operate a pleasure vessel with direct supervision of a person over the age of 18 or after successfully completing a state approved boating safety course.

18 and Older: No boating safety certificate requirement.

Personal Water Craft (PWCs) – All operators of PWCs must obtained a Boater Safety Certificate by taking an 8-hour classroom boating safety course and passing a proctored exam. This means online courses are unacceptable for PWC operators anywhere in New York, including in Suffolk County. For approved course times and locations:

www.nysparks.com/recreation/boating/safety-courses.aspx



With More than 500,000 Members, We Are the Voice of Boaters—Join Us!

www.BoatUS.com