



# BOATING SAFETY

## Safety on the Water

Arkansas has many lakes and miles of rivers and streams perfect for boating. But whether in a fishing boat, powerboat, sailboat or a personal watercraft (like a jet ski), boating can be dangerous. Keep boating safe and fun for everyone by following the tips below.

### Tips for Safe Boating

#### Wear a life jacket.

- In Arkansas, all boats and jet skis must have a U. S. Coast Guard (USCG)-approved life jacket for every person on board. The USCG seal will be on a label in the back of a jacket (like a t-shirt label).
- Any person being towed by a boat or jet ski must wear a USCG-approved life jacket.

#### No drinking or using drugs when boating.

- Drinking or using drugs while operating a boat or jet ski is illegal.
- Just like with cars, have a designated driver. Don't let your children ride with anyone who is impaired.

#### Watch children at all times when they are in or near water.

- Swimming lessons are a great idea for kids, but they do not make children drown proof.
- Be within arm's reach of all children under the age of 5.
- Designate a "Water Watcher." A "Water Watcher" is an adult who watches the water at all times, is not distracted by their cell phone or other activity, is sober, knows how to swim and knows how to perform CPR.

#### Know and understand Arkansas' boating laws.

- Any person born in or after 1986 must pass a boater education course run by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) to operate a powerboat, sailboat or jet ski.
- The boater education card must be carried at all times on the water.
- Visit the AGFC at [www.agfc.com/education/Pages/EducationBoating.aspx](http://www.agfc.com/education/Pages/EducationBoating.aspx) to learn more about Arkansas boating laws.



### Life Jacket Tips

- All children and adults should wear a lifejacket when engaged in boating activities.
- In Arkansas, children 12 and under must wear a USCG life jacket in boats on the water.
- Jackets with flotation collars are a good idea for small children to keep their faces out of the water.
- To make sure a life jacket fits correctly, fasten all straps or zip the jacket. Pull up on the jacket from the shoulders. It's too big if the jacket can be lifted above the chin.



In Cooperation With:

## Statewide Injury Prevention Program

(501) 364-3400 or (866) 611-3445 • [www.archildrens.org/injury\\_prevention](http://www.archildrens.org/injury_prevention)

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Red Cross, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission