



For Immediate Release
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U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Offers Boating Safety Class

FORT MYERS BEACH, FL – March 19, 2026 – That's a NASBLA-approved boating safety course! It's a smart move—not just for the insurance discounts or the legal requirements, but for the "peace of mind" factor when you're out on the water.

Since the Coast Guard Auxiliary classes are famously comprehensive, here is a breakdown of the core wisdom you likely walked away with (and why you'll be glad you have it when things get choppy).

1. The "Rules of the Road" (Navigation)

You learn that the water isn't a free-for-all. Knowing who is the **stand-on vessel** (the one that maintains course) versus the **give-way vessel** (the one that moves) prevents those heart-stopping "which way are they going?" moments.

- **Aids to Navigation (ATON):** You now know that "Red, Right, Returning" means usually keeping the red markers on your right side when heading back to port from the sea.
- **Night Operations:** You learned how to identify a boat's direction and type just by looking at its red, green, and white lights.

2. Emergency Preparedness & Safety Gear

The class likely moved beyond just "have a life jacket" to "have the *right* life jacket."

- **Float Plans:** You learned the importance of telling someone on land where you're going and when you'll be back—the simplest way to save your own life.
- **PFDs:** You probably learned about the different Types (I through V) and that a life jacket only works if you're actually wearing it.
- **Fire Extinguishers:** You now know the specific types required for marine fires (B-I or B-II) and how to check their charge.

3. Understanding the Environment

Boaters often underestimate the elements until they're stuck in them. You likely covered:

- **Weather Reading:** How to spot "anvil clouds" or sudden shifts in wind that signal a coming squall.
- **Tides and Currents:** How horizontal movement (current) and vertical movement (tide) affect your depth and steering.
- **Hypothermia:** Understanding that water doesn't have to be "ice cold" to be dangerous; it strips body heat 25 times faster than air.

4. Legalities and Ethics

The "Glad I Did" part usually hits here. You've learned the local and federal laws that keep you from getting a heavy fine from the Fish and Wildlife Commission or the Coast Guard.

- **BUI (Boating Under the Influence):** You learned that the "alcohol effect" is actually intensified by sun, wind, and vibration on the water.
- **Registration:** The specifics of displaying your hull numbers and carrying your documentation.

Why you will *really* be glad you took it:

Aside from the knowledge, you've likely gained **situational awareness**. Instead of reacting with panic when a large wake approaches or a storm rolls in, you now have a mental checklist to follow. It turns a stressful "near-miss" into a controlled, professional maneuver.

Event Details:

- **What:** Boat America: Responsible Boating Course
- **When:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 OR Saturday April 18 – 9:00 am – 5 pm
- **Where:** Pine Ridge Community Center, 15660 Pine Ridge Rd., Fort Myers, FL, 33908.
- **Hosted by:** U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 91, Fort Myers Beach
- **Cost:** \$45 per person; Students under 17 years old free when accompanied by an adult
- **Registration:** Online at <https://www.aux91fmb.org/safeboating> or 239-690-6780
- **Out of State Visitors Welcomed**

Don't leave your family's safety to chance! Invest in knowledge that lasts a lifetime.

About the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 91, Fort Myers Beach: The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed civilian volunteer component of the United States Coast Guard. Flotilla 91 of Fort Myers Beach is dedicated to promoting boating safety through public education, vessel safety checks, and providing support to the U.S. Coast Guard in various missions, including search and rescue and environmental protection.