



For Immediate Release
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As Summer Boating Season Escalates, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Launches Critical Safety Course in Fort Myers Beach

FORT MYERS BEACH, FL – June 2, 2026 – With Southwest Florida's waterways experiencing a massive surge in summer boat traffic, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 91 has announced a critical "Boat America" Responsible Boating Course on Saturday, June 20, 2026. The NASBLA-approved program is designed to prevent accidents, lower emergency response strain, and equip local boaters with life-saving navigation skills.

As thousands of residents and visitors take to Florida waters this season, the line between a successful day on the Gulf and a maritime emergency often comes down to basic education. The upcoming eight-hour course provides an essential toolkit for navigating Southwest Florida's tight channels, busy passes, and unpredictable summer weather patterns.

"Boating is a core part of our community's lifestyle, but crowded waters demand heightened situational awareness," said Gary Martell, Flotilla Commander. "Our goal is to transform potential 'near-misses' into controlled, safe maneuvers. This course goes beyond legal compliance—it builds the confidence families need to safely enjoy our waters."

The comprehensive course is taught by experienced Coast Guard Auxiliarists and covers vital topics, including:

- **Navigation Essentials:** Mastering the official "Rules of the Road" to avoid close calls with other vessels.
- **Emergency Protocol:** How to handle sudden squalls, mechanical failures, and unexpected medical scenarios.
- **Equipment Mastery:** Proper usage of life jackets, marine fire extinguishers, and legally required safety gear.
- **Legal Regulations:** Staying compliant with federal and Florida state boating laws to avoid heavy fines.

In addition to vital safety knowledge, many marine insurance providers offer premium discounts to boaters who successfully complete this approved course.

Event Registration Details:

- **What:** Boat America: Responsible Boating Course
- **When:** Saturday, June 20, 2026 | 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- **Where:** Pine Ridge Community Center, 15660 Pine Ridge Rd., Fort Myers, FL 33908
- **Cost:** \$45 per person
- **How to Register:** Secure a seat online at www.aux91fmb.org/safeboating or call 239-690-6780. Out-of-state visitors are welcome.

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.

30





Students listen attentively to Coast Guard Auxiliary Instructor David Massey at a recent Boat America Class on Responsible Boating. Photo by US Coast Guard Auxiliary, Fort Myers Beach, Florida.