



For Immediate Release
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary 91
Southeast District
Fort Myers Beach, Florida
Contact: Daniel Eaton
Public Affairs Officer
cgaux91d7publicaffairs@gmail.com
239-425-7914
Follow Us:
Facebook.com/AUX91FMB
www.Aux91FMB.org

Local Communities Strengthened by U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Boating Safety Initiatives

FORT MYERS BEACH, FL – May 6, 2026 – As Southwest Florida gears up for the summer season, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 91 is emphasizing how local boating education directly enhances the safety and quality of life for our waterfront communities. From the deep-water canals of Siesta Isles to the bustling docks of Bayside Estates, the presence of educated, responsible boaters ensures that shared waterways remain a safe environment for all residents.

The upcoming **Boat America course on Responsible Boating**, a NASBLA-approved program, provides boaters with the "Rules of the Road" necessary to navigate tight channels and busy passes with professional precision. By training residents in situational awareness, the Auxiliary helps transform potential "near-misses" into controlled maneuvers, reducing the strain on local emergency resources.

Participants will learn:

1. The "Rules of the Road" (Navigation Basics)
2. Emergency Preparedness & Safety Gear
3. Understanding the Environment
4. Legalities and Ethics

Aside from the knowledge, you're gaining **situational awareness and risk mitigation**. 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.

National Safe Boating Week & Community Safety

As a launching pad for **National Safe Boating Week**, May 16th – 22nd, the Coast Guard Auxiliary reminds all mariners that safety is a collective community effort. This national initiative highlights the importance of wearing life jackets, emergency preparedness, and the dangers of Boating Under the Influence (BUI). Educated boaters in communities like Whiskey Creek and Hidden Harbor act as a first line of defense in maintaining the integrity of our local waters.

Complimentary Vessel Safety Checks

In addition to public education, the Coast Guard Auxiliary offers **free Vessel Safety Checks** (VSC). These complimentary evaluations ensure that boats in neighborhoods like Catalpa Cove or St. Charles Harbour are fully equipped with functional safety gear—such as the correct fire extinguishers and PFD types—without the threat of legal citations. These checks are a vital tool for ensuring peace of mind before heading out to the Gulf.

Event Registration Details

The Auxiliary invites all local residents and out-of-state visitors to register for the upcoming basic safety course:

- What: Boat America: Responsible Boating Course
- When: Saturday, May 16, 2026 – 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
- Where: Pine Ridge Community Center, 15660 Pine Ridge Rd., Fort Myers, FL 33908
- Cost: \$45 per person; Students under 17 are free when accompanied by an adult
- Registration: Online at www.aux91fmb.org/safeboating or call 239-690-6780

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.



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