



Saanich Peninsula Squadron
a unit of
Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons
Vancouver Island South District
P.O. Box 2122, Sidney, BC V8L 3S6



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News Release

For Immediate Release

Local Power Squadron Urges Public to Engage in Safe Boating Practices

North American Safe Boating Awareness Week May 19 - 25, 2007

Sidney, BC — May 18, 2007 — In support of North American Safe Boating Awareness Week, the [Saanich Peninsula Squadron](#) of CPS (Canadian Power & Sail Squadron, a nationwide volunteer organization) encourages the public to take boating safety seriously. Both Canada and the U.S. are working together to build awareness for safety on the water and are taking this initiative seriously.

The waterways surrounding Vancouver Island are becoming busier than ever with an increase in local power and sail recreational boaters, out of town transient visitors, float planes, cruise ships, water skiers, canoers and kayakers. Understanding the “floating rules of the road” will help ensure accident free and pleasurable boating experiences. Learning boating safety practices is a fundamental responsibility of every boater.

Boaters are legally responsible to equip themselves and their boats and understand the laws and regulations that govern safe operation of vessels on our Canadian waterways. Most of the unfortunate incidences that occur on the water need not happen and most are preventable with some basic boating knowledge and good boating judgment. The primary mission in the Saanich Peninsula Power and Sail Squadron is to educate and train the public on boating safety.

Safe boating starts with accredited boating safety courses. "Everyone on the water should understand the rules of the water, it's not only for your own safety it's for everybody," said Len Burton, executive officer, Saanich Peninsula Power and Sail Squadron. "People wouldn't drive on our roads without a license and learned driving skills; the same applies on the water, people shouldn't go boating without safe boating knowledge. Period." The Saanich Peninsula Squadron offers the following boating safety tips and basic precautions:

- Everyone onboard (including the family pet) should wear a Personal Floatation Device (PFD) that fits properly.
- Always check the weather forecast BEFORE heading out. An unprepared boater can be quickly caught off guard by shifting tides, strong unexpected currents, and sudden changes in the direction of wind and sea.
- If someone falls overboard, do not jump in after him or her. Quickly maneuver your boat to return and recover the person from the water.



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- If a storm or heavy fog approaches, reduce speed and head to shore or to a sheltered safe anchorage.
- Do not stand up in a small boat.
- Stay well clear of ferries and other large commercial vessels.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Don't overload your vessel with too many passengers.
- If your boat capsizes, stay with the boat and hang on.
- To avoid hypothermia adopt a H.E.L.P "Heat Escape Lessening Position" by crossing the arms tightly against the chest and drawing the knees up to the chest. A group of people should huddle.
- Stay calm.

Knowing how to handle emergency situations is critical and can turn a potential disaster into a well-handled situation. With a little training, the public is in a much better position to not only help themselves but also fellow boaters that are in distress. Excellent advice to boaters is contained in the federal government 'Safe Boating Guide', available free of charge from any Marine Chandler.

Saanich Peninsula Squadron offers a wide-range of beginner and advanced boating courses. For detailed information on the following courses such as: The Boating Course, Marine Radio Telephone (VHF), Piloting, Advanced Piloting, Marine Maintenance and Fundamentals of Weather, **visit the Saanich Peninsula Squadron's web site to sign up for courses online at: www.sppss.org** or call the Course Registrar Bryan Atkinson (250) 483-6844 or email Course Registration at: registrar@sppss.org. Fall classes begin September 2007. Reader's/Viewers who live outside the Saanich Peninsula can look for their local CPS Squadron on the web at: www.visd.org.

About Saanich Peninsula Power & Sail Squadron:

The Saanich Peninsula Power & Sail Squadron has been teaching multiple levels of safe boating and navigation for more than 36 years. All officers and course instructors are volunteers. The Saanich Peninsula Squadron is a unit of the Canadian Power & Sail Squadron (CPS), a nationwide volunteer organization of recreational boating enthusiasts incorporated under the companies Act of Canada. The organization's mission is to increase awareness and knowledge of safe boating by educating and training members and the general public. For more safe boating information visit the Canadian Safe Boating Council of Canada at www.csbc.ca

Editor's Note:

The media can play a pivotal role in getting the Safe Boating Message out to our community. The waters surrounding Vancouver Island is one of the most popular boating locales in the world. Your assistance in helping us reach the community is greatly appreciated.

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"Look astern before you turn."
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