

## **Nonprofit Organization Grants:**

Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety  
Recreational Boating Safety

Federal Grant Title:	National Non-Profit Organization Grant Program
Federal Agency:	United States Coast Guard
Funding Opportunity Number:	DHS-USCG-2021-001
Type of Funding:	Cooperative Agreement
CFDA Numbers:	97.012
CFDA Descriptions:	Boating Safety Financial Assistance

Grantee: National Safe Boating Council (NSBC)  
Grant Number: 3321FAN201116  
Grant Title: Safe Boating Campaign  
Period of Performance: 1 year grant

Award Amount: \$310,000.00

### **Summary:**

The National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) will lead an outreach effort, Safe Boating Campaign, to educate boaters and their families on the importance of always wearing a life jacket and adopting other responsible boating behaviors, such as always using an engine cut-off switch, never boating under the influence, and taking a boater education course. This includes providing a national campaign foundation and marketing guidance to support a growing network of recreational boating safety partners through video and radio PSAs, co-branded logos and other marketing materials, posters, billboards, educational items, digital resource kit, social media campaign templates, and more.

The Safe Boating Campaign will take a consumer-first approach to directly appeal to boaters, specifically focused on users of small [21-feet and less] open motorboats, paddlers, hunters and anglers, and personal watercraft – this accounts for about 95% of boats on the water. Efforts will include soliciting partner support to guide resources development (i.e., PSA, social media multimedia, and other advertisements), serving as a marketing partner for campaign partners, leading national grassroots outreach and events, implementing innovative advertising and marketing efforts, and providing free boating safety resources to contribute to building a boating safety culture.

<https://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/>



**National Safe Boating Council**

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December 20, 2022

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For the FY22, the U.S. Coast Guard granted the National Safe Boating Council \$310,000 for the Safe Boating Campaign, Agreement No. 3321FAN2011.16. This letter, together with the enclosed Executive Summary and Program Evaluation, is our final report.

Sincerely,

/Peg Phillips/  
Executive Director  
National Safe Boating Council



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The U.S. Coast Guard awarded the National Safe Boating Council a grant for the Safe Boating Campaign, Agreement No. 3321FAN2011.16, for a national outreach and education awareness effort to influence the public to always wear a life jacket while boating and to adopt safe boating behaviors. The campaign built on the theme, “Wear It,” to develop compelling resources to reach boaters around the nation. This was supported by a national grassroots network, outreach events, digital advertising, marketing efforts, and providing free boating safety resources to contribute to building a boating safety culture.

The Safe Boating Campaign was supported by a network of 600 partners from around the world, each with their own distinct reach and sphere of influence. National Safe Boating Week and Wear Your Life Jacket at Work Day were the foundation for public outreach events around the world. More than 50,000 people participated in these events using resources from the Safe Boating Campaign. In addition, Twiggy the Water Skiing Squirrel educated more than 75,000 people at in-person events on the importance of wearing a life jacket and prominently displayed the Safe Boating Campaign logo. Plus, hundreds of organizational partners shared campaign resources, launch signs, and social media posts at conferences and community outreach opportunities. The NSBC distributed nearly 300,000 resources to partners as part of the free resource distribution drive.

Marketing activities included a robust campaign on Google AdWords, social media, and iHeart Media radio ads. Efforts focused on reaching new boaters with boating safety messages. PR efforts focused on National Safe Boating Week, Fourth of July, and Labor Day. This included securing a Presidential Proclamation in coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety in recognition of National Safe Boating Week.

Earned media relations efforts resulted in nearly 1.8 billion impressions with an ad equivalency value of \$2.0 million (trackable via automated service). Targeted social media brought boating safety messages directly to millions of boaters. The most popular content included infographics, lifestyle images, memes, and video PSAs paired with fun messaging and safety tips. Organic content had 1,625,532 engagements across platforms – this includes actual interactions with Safe Boating Campaign content (not views).

The campaign was also supported and emulated by partners in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Japan, Mexico, and New Zealand.

With more boaters on the water than ever before, the Safe Boating Campaign reached thousands of boaters around the world with boating safety messages, specifically encouraging them to wear a life jacket and boat responsibly.



## PROGRAM EVALUATION

Following are program metrics as of October 5, 2022. The NSBC updated and maintained [www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com](http://www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com) throughout the project period to improve user-experience for shareability and responsiveness, including posting all campaign resources.

- 1) **Advertising reach:** The Safe Boating Campaign was supported by digital and radio advertising. Google AdWords resulted in 22,624 impressions resulting in 1,766 unique clicks with an average click-through rate of 7.81% (industry average is 2-3%). In addition, new radio PSAs aired on iHeart Media reaching 6,382,700 listeners throughout Delaware, D.C., Florida, Maryland, and Virginia.
- 2) **Digital analytics:** These analytics reflect various marketing activities to drive boaters to [www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com](http://www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com).
  - Google Analytics: 47,147 unique visitors
  - iHeart Media radio advertising: 6,382,700 listeners
  - Newsletters: 9 HTML newsletters with resources and other information from the campaign were distributed to over 3,600 people
  - Blog posts: 33 blog posts with updates and information from the campaign
  - Social media: 1,625,532 engagements across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, with the most popular content being fun memes, life jacket tips, and reminders to take a boating safety course.
- 3) **Annual survey:** The annual awareness survey found that the Safe Boating Campaign asked boaters questions relative to life jacket wear and other boating safety behaviors. 51% of respondents indicated that they require their passengers to wear life jackets at ALL times. The number one reason why they did not require their passenger(s) to wear a life jacket at all times is because the passengers are adults, and it is not required by federal law. Respondents shared they, and their passengers, would be persuaded to wear a life jacket if it was required by law. 99% of respondents indicated they own a life jacket, with the majority of these inherently buoyant life jackets. The survey also found that 50% of respondents had never worn an inherently buoyant life jacket.
- 4) **Resources distribution:** The Safe Boating Campaign provides a library of downloadable and printed resources for partners. New resources include still photography, video, radio, and print extensions), social media multimedia (i.e., images, quick facts, illustrations, GIFs, animated shorts), and other advertisements (i.e., digital ads, radio, print publications). All resources were updated and available on the campaign website. There were 18,989 views/downloads of Safe Boating Campaign digital resources.  
Following is a snapshot of the printed resources that were shipped:
  - Brochure Box Sets: 351 boxes (each box included 300 brochures)



- Safe Boating Campaign Banner: 51 banners
  - Safe Boating Campaign Box Sets: 123 boxes (each box included 100 items valued at over \$100)
  - Safe Boating Campaign Stickers and Decals: 25 boxes
  - Remember to Wear It Launch Signs: 1,500 signs
  - Other items (banners, DVDs, and flyers): 150,000 items
- 5) **Partnerships:** There were 600 registered campaign partners, and over 75 new co-branded logos were provided. The campaign continued its 22-year partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service in sharing boating safety messages throughout National Safe Boating Week. Additional noteworthy partnerships include worldwide recognized Twiggy the Water Skiing Squirrel; pro-angler Hunter Bland served as a Safe Boating Campaign national spokesperson and included the campaign logo on his truck, professional fishing boat, jersey, and shared why he supports the campaign at outreach events and tournaments; Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission shared about the Safe Boating Campaign in National Safe Boating Week media tour; Take Me Fishing's support throughout National Safe Boating Week; NMMA continued to share about the Safe Boating Campaign in their kids passport at boat shows; several industry partners shared their support for the Safe Boating Campaign on social media, most notably ACR Artex, Mustang Survival, the Four W's Fishing Team, and the Sean Craig Memorial Fund.
- 6) **Outreach events:** The Safe Boating Campaign is supported by a grassroots network of more than 3,600 people representing state agencies, nonprofits, boat clubs, parks, and more. The NSBC provided resources and more to support two grassroots events: National Safe Boating Week (May 21-27, 2022) and Wear Your Life Jacket at Work Day (May 20, 2022). 9,388 unique visitors accessed resources for these events, 599 people signed up as official campaign partners, and more than 13,500 people participated in Wear Your Life Jacket at Work Day (trackable on social media). The NSBC supported campaign partners for these outreach events with customized digital toolkits for each event, featuring sample outreach plan and resources, fact sheets, local/state/federal proclamations, press releases, letters to the editor, social media content and images, educational items, event badges, and other template materials.
- 7) **Public relations:** Earned media relations efforts resulted in nearly 1.8 billion impressions with an ad equivalency value of \$2.0 million (trackable via automated service). This does not include all radio and local coverage across the country due to budget limitations for monitoring services. This included six press releases on the national newswire and thousands of placements in local markets including letters to the editor, local coverage, and more using the resources from the Safe Boating Campaign. Notable national media coverage on two FOX Weather segments with the Safe Boating Campaign spokesperson, Hunter Bland. President Biden issued a proclamation in support of National Safe Boating Week using the template information provided by the National Safe Boating Council.