Boater Education

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary: Marine Zoning and Regulatory Review

Todd Hitchins
Team O.C.E.A.N Coordinator

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In order to operate a motorboat of ten (10) horsepower or greater, *Florida law (P.L. 327.395)* requires anyone who was born on or after Jan. 1, 1988 to successfully complete an **approved boating safety course** and obtain a Boating Safety Education Identification Card issued by the FWC.

Florida does not have a "boating license." The Boating Safety Education Identification Card is proof of successful completion of the educational requirements and is valid for life.

29,359 Cards issued state-wide in calendar year 2012.

**Visitors** can get a **temporary certificate in order to rent a boat or PWC**.
What Courses are “Approved”?

Classroom Courses (Must be minimum 8 hours)

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
Boating Skills and Seamanship Course
• This course is offered several times per year in locations throughout the Keys

U.S. Power Squadron
America's Boating Course
• This course is offered several times per year in locations throughout the Keys

Correspondence Course

FWC “How to Boat Smart” manual
• Pick up the manual at your local tax collector’s office; study and take the exam at home; mail to FWC for grading and certification
What Courses are “Approved”?

FWC-approved Online Boating Courses Available

- Boat-Ed Online: boat-ed.com
- Boater 101: boater101.com
- Boat US: boatus.com
- Nautical Know How: boatsafe.com
- PWC Safety School: pwcsafetyschool.com
- American Safety Council: floridaboatingcourse.com
- Boating Basics Online: boatingbasicsonline.com/content/fl/
- American Boat Operator: boatcourse.com
- Boater Exam: www.boaterexam.com/usa/florida/
- Safe Boating Card: www.safeboatingcard.com/?ref=myfwc

- Online Boating Course completion accounts for 60% of Boater Safety I.D. cards issued state-wide
Eco-Mariner
Online Course- http://ecomariner.org/

The goal of the Eco-Mariner course is to provide motor boaters with the necessary knowledge to protect Florida Bay’s sensitive environment. This course provides an understanding of Florida Bay’s Geography, Threats, Protection, and Regulations.

~1000 Certified “Eco-Mariners” since 2009. (Source: NPCA)
Additional Boater Education

Possession of a USCG License meets the Florida State Boater Education requirement

May be obtained directly through USCG or a USCG-Approved Captain’s License Course (Sea School)

USCG-approved vendors can be found at: http://www.uscg.mil/nmc/courses/default.asp?tab=0#TabbedPanels1

USCG-NMC approved vendor in Monroe County: Captains Marine • Based in the Florida Keys and is approved by the United States Coast Guard and National Maritime Center to conduct classroom and online courses for the following: OUPV; 50-100 Ton Masters; Tow, Sail, & Marine Radio Operator Endorsements
Monroe County Boater Education Statistics

• Total Registered Recreational Vessels: **23,863**

• Boater Safety I.D. Cards issued: **355** (Source: FWC, 2012)
  
  ▪ Completed USCG Auxiliary BS&S Class: ~**700** (Source: USCG Auxiliary, 2012)
  
  ▪ Completed USPS ABC Boater Course: ~**100** (Source: USPS, 2012)
  
  ▪ Online Boating Course completion accounts for **60%** of Boater Safety I.D. cards issued state-wide (all counties +/- 5%)

• FKNMS partners with USCG Auxiliary and USPS by providing education staff to give a 1-hour guest lecture specific to sanctuary regulations and resource protection as related to boating during most classes held in Monroe County
Potential Next Steps

• Engage with Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission Boating Advisory Council

• Host a joint meeting / workshop

• Present Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary boating and boating education issues to the Boating Advisory Council

*FWC Boating Advisory Council meeting in Key West May 2014