



**United Spinal
Association**
Motorsafe****

Boat Safety



United States Coast Guard statistics show that in 2004, there were 676 fatalities, 3,363 injuries, and 4,904 accidents involving recreational boats. Approximately 70% of all fatal boating accident victims drowned (484 out of 676) and 90% of the victims who drowned were not wearing a life jacket. Approximately 431 lives could have been saved if boaters had worn their life jackets. A majority of boating accidents involve two vessels, but capsizing and falls overboard account for 57% of reported fatal accidents. Approximately 70% of all reported fatalities occurred on boats where the operator had not received boating safety instruction. Alcohol was involved in approximately one-third of all boating fatalities in 2004.

More Facts on the Back

Causes of Boating Accidents

- Carelessness/reckless operation
- Operator inattention
- Operator inexperience
- Excessive speed
- Hazardous waters
- Alcohol

Ways to Protect Yourself

- Learn how to swim
- Do not operate a boat if you're intoxicated, tired, or on medication
- Wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets
- Always check weather forecasts before boating
- Operate your boat at safe speeds
- Do not overload your boat
- Equip your boat with a fully charged fire extinguisher
- Obey the rules of the water
- Be aware of other boats and watercraft around you
- Be aware of low water areas or submerged objects
- Enroll in a boating educational course

For more information on United Spinal Association's Motorsafe Program visit our Web site at www.unitedspinal.org



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**Expanding Opportunities for People with
Spinal Cord Disabilities for Over 60 Years**