



Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey 2016 Executive Summary and Detailed Findings November 1, 2016

Commissioned by National Safe Boating Council
Conducted by Paul Werth Associates

Background

The National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) exists to promote recreational boating safety and reduce boating accidents by providing safe boating educational materials, resources, tools, creative messages, and instructor training. NSBC also leads the annual North American Safe Boating Campaign. This yearlong campaign promotes safe and responsible boating and the value of voluntary life jacket wear by recreational boaters through the national theme, Wear It! The 2016 awareness campaign was the 10th year for the state-level support of the Wear It! campaign.

Research Objectives

NSBC would like to determine the campaign's effectiveness, specifically to: (1) determine and quantify the impact of the campaign on life jacket wear, attitudes and behaviors on safety measures, and (2) gain insights that might be helpful in improving the campaign in the future.

To assist in the process, Paul Werth Associates conducted a research study in order to meet the following objectives:

- Measure awareness of the Wear It! campaign and logo.
- Quantify the number likely to sign a Wear It! Pledge. card and possible impact of the pledge on boating safety.
- Measure life jacket wear.
- Determine reasons for wearing or not wearing a life jacket.
- Understand boaters' attitudes toward safety.
- Obtain reactions to items that might convince boaters to increase the wearing of life jackets.
- Determine if results vary by no activity, medium, and high campaign activity locations.
- Identify changes, if any, from prior years' surveys.



*Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and
Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.*



Approach

Leveraging a team of volunteers at rivers, lakes, bays, and other bodies of water, on-site surveys were collected from late April until early October 2016. Based on their level of Wear It! campaign activity, the locations were classified as no, medium, or high activity. The “no activity” includes locations that have no or low levels of campaign activity. All surveys were self-administered (completed by boaters, not interviewers).

Prior to collecting surveys, volunteers participated in training sessions to understand the guidelines to consistently collect surveys. They were briefed on the approach (i.e., “We’re collecting surveys at different bodies of water around the United States about boating. It’ll only take about five minutes of your time. You can fill out the survey yourself, and for participating, you’ll receive this gift.”), qualifying criteria and procedures (i.e., participant must be 18+ years of age, has used or been a passenger in one of the boats listed in Question 1, has no commercial boating operations, has no employees, must complete the survey themselves), checking surveys (i.e., all questions answered, location filled out), and providing incentives (a Wear It! waterproof-dry bag). For this year’s survey, a training session was recorded to allow those unable to attend to listen to the call. In addition, a Q&A document was compiled to answer commonly asked questions.

At the end of the self-administered surveys, boaters were asked if they were willing to complete a follow-up telephone interview. In order to gain additional insights and suggestions for the campaign, four in-depth telephone interviews were conducted with participants who wear their life jackets “rarely” or “sometimes.” Each interview lasted about 30 minutes.

A total of 1,253 surveys were collected from 36 different bodies of water in 14 different states and returned for processing:

- 448 surveys from locations that have had no Wear It! campaign activity (no or low marketing efforts)
- 565 surveys from locations that have had a medium level of campaign activity (branded posters/signs)
- 240 surveys from locations that have had a high level of campaign activity (events, signage, and perhaps law enforcement or state agency vehicle wrapped in Wear It! logo)

See Appendix A (pages 28-29) for details of number of surveys by specific locations.

See Appendix B (pages 30-33) for results from the phone interviews conducted with boaters.

See Appendix C (pages 34-36) for verbatim comments.



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Executive Summary

The Wear It! campaign continues to have a **positive impact** on boaters' behavior regarding safety. Awareness of the Wear It! campaign was similar across all locations, which might be attributed to some of the medium and no activity sites having previously participated in the survey.

- Those aware of the campaign are significantly more likely to wear life jackets “always or most of the time” compared to those unaware of the campaign.
- Participants from medium and high campaign activity locations are more likely to wear their life jackets “always or most of the time” versus those from no campaign activity locations.

When completing the survey this year, participants were asked to read a description of the Wear It! Pledge (within survey) and asked how likely they would be to sign it.

- Participants from high campaign locations were significantly more likely to sign the pledge than those from medium or no campaign activity locations (76 percent versus 61 percent).

The Wear It! campaign continues to have a positive impact on boaters' **behaviors and attitudes** regarding safety.

- Significantly more boaters who are aware of the campaign agree with the safety statements versus those who are unaware.
- Boaters who are aware of the campaign are significantly more likely to wear a life jacket because they “feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice” and “have heard of situations where a life jacket has saved a life.”
- Boaters at high campaign activity locations are also significantly more likely than boaters at all other locations to “worry about other boaters and their unsafe practices.”
- Boaters at high and medium campaign activity locations are more likely to believe that “drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets” versus boaters from no campaign activity locations.
- Compared to 2015, more boaters at medium activity locations in 2016 agree with the statement: “I believe the Wear It! Pledge is an effective way to increase use of life jackets.” This increase might be attributed to including the pledge description in the survey.

The **barriers** to life jacket wear are similar to prior years.

- The main barriers are uncomfortable life jackets, no laws requiring wear, and forgetting or not thinking about wearing one.

Motivators to increase life jacket wear among those who wear them “rarely or never” are consistent with prior years:

- Enacting laws that require life jacket wear.
- Having life jackets that are more comfortable and less bulky.



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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Based on the findings, the following suggestions are offered:

- Continue the North American Safe Boating Campaign, devoting more resources to raise awareness and increase life jacket wear at current and new locations.
- Promote the campaign at boat launching sites, posting notices next to other posted signs (e.g., fishing laws).
- Designate on-site advocates for each location to share boating stories, emphasizing the benefits of using life jackets, and reminding boaters to wear life jackets.
- Continue surveys, increasing overall awareness levels and promoting safety.
- Educate boaters about newer and more comfortable styles of life jackets.
- Continue to collaborate with manufacturers to expand the distribution, promotion, and affordability of inflatable life jackets.
- Promote life jacket wear through role modeling (e.g., parents always wearing them when boating with children).
- Require and reinforce life jacket wear for all personal watercraft/manual boats on all bodies of water at all times, during any races or competitions and for any non-swimmers.
- Provide newer and more comfortable life jackets for complimentary use, especially among personal watercraft/manual boat users.

For next year's survey, the following suggestions are offered:

- For the no campaign activity locations, gain cooperation from locations that do not have any campaign activity and have not previously been a survey location.
- For high campaign activity locations, include locations that have increased their campaign activity from moderate to high and/or have consistently been a high campaign location.



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Key Findings

- **Those aware of the campaign** are significantly more likely than those who are unaware to:
 - Wear their life jackets “always or most of the time.”
 - Wear their life jackets because they “feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice” and “have heard of situations where a life jacket has saved a life.”
 - Indicate they would sign the Wear It! Pledge (74 percent who are aware of the campaign versus 59 percent who are unaware of the campaign).
 - Agree with the statements: “I believe drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets”; “I worry about other boaters and their unsafe practices”; “I believe the Wear It! Pledge is an effective way to increase use of life jackets”; and “It is important for me as a boater to encourage others to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing.”
- **Boaters in locations with high campaign activity** skew male and are younger than participants from locations with moderate or no campaign activity. The high campaign activity boaters also were more likely to be using a sailboat than other participants. These boaters in locations with high campaign activity are significantly more likely than other boaters to:
 - Indicate they would sign the Wear It! Pledge (76 percent of boaters from high campaign activity locations versus 61 percent of all other boaters).
 - Wear their life jackets when “conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen.”
 - Agree with the statements: “I believe the Wear It! Pledge is an effective way to increase use of life jackets”; “I worry about other boaters and their unsafe practices”; “I have not been involved in any situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful or needed”; “I am a very strong swimmer.”
- **The top two barriers to using life jackets** are discomfort and no legal requirement to wear one. Boaters explain that life jackets are too hot, bulky, and often conditions do not warrant wearing one.
- **Boaters who wear their life jackets “always or most of the time”** are significantly more likely than other boaters to:
 - Be aware of the Wear It! campaign and recognize the Wear It! logo.
 - Indicate they would sign a Wear It! Pledge (78 percent versus 60 percent of “somewhat” and 37 percent of “rarely/never” wear life jackets).
 - Wear their life jackets because they “feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice” and “are required to wear a life jacket by law.”
 - Be least likely than other boaters to select the statement: “I wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen” as a reason for wearing them.
 - Agree with the statements: “I believe drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets”; “I believe the Wear It! Pledge is an effective way to increase use of life jackets”; “It is important for me as a boater to encourage others to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing”; and “I try to boat safely and responsibly at all times.”
- Having more comfortable life jackets and a law requiring boaters to wear life jackets would motivate more boaters to wear life jackets more often. In addition, some participants said boating safety education (23 percent) and hearing or seeing reminders (29 percent) to wear a life jacket might motivate others to wear life jackets.





Detailed Findings

Awareness of Wear It! Campaign

Awareness levels are the same as last year, with 38 percent of boaters in 2016 aware of the Wear It! campaign. No differences are found in awareness levels by Wear It! campaign activity. The lack of difference might be due to having some of the same “no campaign” activity locations and some of them had medium or high campaign activity in prior years (see Appendix A, pages 28-29).

	Aware of Wear It! Campaign															
	Total				2013 Campaign Activity			2014 Campaign Activity			2015 Campaign Activity			2016 Campaign Activity		
	2013	2014	2015	2016	None	Medium	High									
Number answering:	(678)	(602)	(1072)	(1253)	(327)	(199)	(152)	(180)	(130)	(292)	(507)	(376)	(189)	(448)	(565)	(240)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	41	46	40	38	31	47	56	45	35	52	34	44	48	37	39	37
No	52	47	53	54	63	46	37	47	60	41	56	50	48	54	50	60
Not sure	7	7	7	8	6	7	7	8	5	7	9	7	4	9	10	3

- = Significantly higher than respective column(s) at 95 percent confidence level
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- = Significantly higher when compared to prior year for respective number(s)

Similar to last year, those wearing their life jackets “always or most of the time” are significantly more likely to be aware of the campaign than other boaters. Those wearing their life jackets “sometimes” are significantly more aware of the campaign than those who “rarely or never” wear their life jackets.

	Aware of Wear It! Campaign											
	2013 Wear Life Jacket			2014 Wear Life Jacket			2015 Wear Life Jacket			2016 Wear Life Jacket		
	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely/Never
Number answering:	(297)	(158)	(222)	(313)	(134)	(152)	(567)	(242)	(261)	(657)	(303)	(293)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	52	35	31	55	38	36	47	37	27	45	35	24
No	42	59	62	38	54	58	46	55	65	44	58	71
Not sure	6	6	8	7	8	7	7	9	8	11	7	5

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Recognize Wear It! Logo

Among the 2016 participants, about one-half (48 percent) recognize the logo, which is statistically the same as most prior years. No differences are found by the level of campaign activity. Results are statistically the same as last year.

Recognize Logo

	Total				2013 Campaign Activity			2014 Campaign Activity			2015 Campaign Activity			2016 Campaign Activity		
	2013	2014	2015	2016	None	Medium	High									
	(672)	(603)	(1052)	(1237)	(324)	(198)	(150)	(180)	(131)	(292)	(493)	(373)	(186)	(442)	(557)	(240)
Number answering:																
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	49	56	52	48	41	53	60	59	45	59	48	53	57	48	47	52
No	44	40	43	46	50	44	33	36	51	38	45	42	41	47	45	47
Not sure	7	4	5	6	10	3	7	5	4	3	7	5	2	6	8	1

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Those wearing their life jackets “always” are significantly more likely to recognize the Wear It! logo than boaters who wear their life jackets “sometimes, rarely or never” (55 percent versus 48 percent and 34 percent, respectively).

Recognize Logo

	2013 Wear Life Jacket			2014 Wear Life Jacket			2015 Wear Life Jacket			2016 Wear Life Jacket		
	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely/Never									
	(295)	(157)	(219)	(313)	(134)	(153)	(552)	(239)	(261)	(646)	(301)	(290)
Number answering:												
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	59	41	40	64	52	44	58	53	36	55	48	34
No	32	51	57	32	44	53	37	42	57	37	48	62
Not sure	10	8	3	4	5	3	5	5	7	8	4	4

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Likelihood of Signing Wear It! Pledge

For 2016, boaters were asked to read a description of the Wear It! Pledge and asked if they would be willing to sign this pledge.

I will always boat responsibly by:

- *Wearing my life jacket and ensuring that everyone on board wears their life jacket;*
- *Remaining sober and alert - remembering that the use of alcohol contributes to accidents on the water;*
- *Staying in control of my craft and respecting the right of others enjoying the waterways;*
- *Knowing and obeying navigation rules, operating at a safe speed, and maintaining a proper lookout.*

About two-thirds of boaters (64 percent) are likely to sign the pledge. Boaters from “high” Wear It! campaign locations (76 percent), those using a personal watercraft (PWC) or manual boat (74 percent), those aware of the campaign/logo (72 percent), and boaters who wear their life jackets “always” or “most of the time” (78 percent) are significantly more likely than other boaters to sign the pledge.

	Likelihood of Signing Pledge										
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Campaign Activity</u>			<u>Type of Boat</u>		<u>Aware of Campaign/Logo</u>		<u>Wear Life Jacket</u>		
			<u>None</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>PWC/Manual</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>	<u>Always/Most</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>
<i>Number answering:</i>	(1225)	(438)	(553)	(240)	(389)	(851)	(634)	(587)	(640)	(303)	(287)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Top Two Boxes	64	61	61	76	74	59	72	55	78	60	37
Very likely	42	42	39	50	50	38	53	31	61	26	17
Somewhat likely	22	19	22	27	24	21	20	24	17	34	20
Neutral	23	28	23	15	17	26	18	29	14	33	35
Bottom Two Boxes	13	10	16	9	9	15	10	16	8	8	28
Somewhat unlikely	6	4	8	6	5	7	4	9	4	4	13
Very unlikely	7	7	9	3	4	8	6	7	4	4	15

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Life Jacket Wear

More than one-half of the participants (52 percent) wear life jackets “always or most of the time,” which is about the same percentage as the past two years. Among those who would be “very likely” to sign the pledge, 76 percent indicate that they wear their life jacket “always” or “most of the time.” More interesting is that 25 percent who wear their life jackets “sometimes, rarely, or never” would be very likely to sign the pledge.

	Life Jacket Wear				Very Likely To Sign	All Others
	2013	2014	2015	2016		
<i>Number answering:</i>	(677)	(602)	(1070)	(1253)	(516)	(709)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Top Two Boxes	44	52	53	52	76	35
Always	25	35	34	36	56	20
Most of the time	19	17	19	17	19	15
Sometimes	23	22	23	24	15	31
Bottom Two Boxes	33	26	24	23	10	33
Rarely	21	16	15	17	7	24
Never	12	10	9	7	3	10

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Boaters from locations with medium campaign activity have the greatest life jacket usage (60 percent). Some of these locations had campaign activity last year. Life jacket usage is lowest among boaters from locations with no campaign activity (44 percent). Compared to 2015, results are statistically equivalent on top two box scores.

	Life Jacket Wear											
	2013			2014			2015			2016		
	Campaign Activity			Campaign Activity			Campaign Activity			Campaign Activity		
	None	Medium	High									
<i>Number answering:</i>	(327)	(198)	(152)	(178)	(131)	(293)	(505)	(376)	(189)	(448)	(565)	(240)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Top Two Boxes	38	49	51	45	56	55	51	54	58	44	60	50
Always	19	31	32	29	37	37	31	38	33	30	40	35
Most of the time	19	18	19	16	18	18	20	15	25	15	20	15
Sometimes	25	24	18	26	17	23	24	21	22	26	21	28
Bottom Two Boxes	38	28	31	29	28	22	26	25	20	29	19	23
Rarely	28	13	16	16	18	14	16	15	15	18	15	19
Never	10	15	15	13	9	8	10	10	5	12	4	4

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Participants aware of the campaign are significantly more likely to wear life jackets “always or most of the time” versus those unaware of the campaign (60 percent versus 45 percent). Results are consistent with prior years.

	Life Jacket Wear							
	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>
<i>Number answering:</i>	(355)	(318)	(356)	(246)	(582)	(476)	(647)	(593)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Top Two Boxes	53	34	59	42	60	44	60	45
Always	30	20	38	31	38	28	40	31
Most of the time	23	14	21	11	22	16	20	14
Sometimes	21	26	21	25	23	22	24	25
Bottom Two Boxes	27	40	20	33	17	33	17	30
Rarely	17	25	12	21	13	19	12	22
Never	10	15	8	12	5	14	5	8*

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Similar to prior years, those using a personal watercraft (PWC) or manual boat are significantly more likely to wear life jackets “always or most of the time” (74 percent) versus those using other boats (42 percent). Life jacket usage among users of other boats in 2016 (42 percent wear “always or most of the time”) returned to the 2014 level (41 percent). Please note, for PWCs and some manually propelled boats, life jacket wear is required.

Life Jacket Wear

	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Type of Boat		Type of Boat		Type of Boat		Type of Boat	
	<u>PWC/Manual</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>PWC/Manual</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>PWC/Manual</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>PWC/Manual</u>	<u>Others</u>
<i>Number answering:</i>	(135)	(524)	(135)	(442)	(218)	(853)	(402)	(851)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>Top Two Boxes</u>	79	35	84	41	75	47	74	42
Always	60	16	71	24	59	27	62	23
Most of the time	19	19	13	17	16	20	12	19
Sometimes	10	27	10	26	11	26	12	30
<u>Bottom Two Boxes</u>	12	38	5	33	14	27	14	28
Rarely	6	25	3	20	9	17	10	20
Never	6	13	2	13	6	10	4	8

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= Significantly higher when compared to prior year for respective number(s)



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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Reasons for Wearing Life Jackets

“I feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice” (48 percent) and “I wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen” (44 percent, an increase from 37 percent in 2015) are the top two reasons most often selected for wearing a life jacket.

Those who indicate they would be “very likely to sign” the Wear It! Pledge are significantly more likely to indicate that they “feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice” (64 percent versus all others). Those are “somewhat or less likely to sign” the pledge are more likely to select “I wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen” as their reason for wearing a life jacket.

Reasons for Wearing Life Jackets

	<u>2013</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>Very Likely</u> <u>To Sign</u>	<u>All</u> <u>Others</u>
<i>Number answering and excludes those who say "never wear":</i>	(587)	(555)	(960)	(1151)	(493)	(634)
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
I wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen	44	32	37	44	29	55
I feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice	43	51	51	48	64	35
I am required to wear a life jacket by law	22	21	25	22	28	18
I have heard of situations where a life jacket has saved a life	18	18	20	19	24	15
I am not a good swimmer or do not know how to swim	7	8	7	7	8	5
I signed a pledge to wear a life jacket	2	2	2	2	4	0
Other reasons	9	9	8	8	8	9

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 = Significantly higher when compared to prior year for respective number(s)



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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Those participating from medium campaign activity locations are the most likely to indicate that they “**feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice.**” Boaters from high campaign activity locations are significantly less likely to select this response as a reason for wearing their life jackets. Those from high campaign activity locations are more likely to select “**I wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen**” (56 percent), a significant increase from prior years (38 percent in 2015 and 27 percent in 2014).

Reasons for Wearing Life Jackets

	2013			2014			2015			2016		
	Campaign Activity			Campaign Activity			Campaign Activity			Campaign Activity		
	<u>None</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>High</u>									
<i>Number answering and excludes those who say "never wear":</i>	(293)	(165)	(129)	(166)	(119)	(270)	(446)	(339)	(175)	(389)	(534)	(228)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen	53	33	37	37	36	27	41	32	38	46	37	56
I feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice	37	47	51	38	44	61	48	56	49	44	54	38
I am required to wear a life jacket by law	23	25	17	15	24	24	22	28	26	25	23	14
I have heard of situations where a life jacket has saved a life	21	20	9	17	18	19	19	21	18	18	17	24
I am not a good swimmer or do not know how to swim	5	9	8	5	6	10	9	6	3	4	9	4
I signed a pledge to wear a life jacket	2	4	0	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	5
Other reasons	10	10	5	15	4	7	7	8	11	7	10	6

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Participants aware of the campaign/logo are significantly more likely to indicate they “**feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice**” and “**have heard of situations where a life jacket has saved a life**” than boaters not aware of the campaign/logo. Boaters in 2016 who are not aware of the campaign/logo are significantly more likely to indicate they “**wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen**” than boaters in 2015.

Reasons for Wearing Life Jackets

	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>
<i>Number answering and excludes those who say "never wear":</i>	(318)	(266)	(332)	(223)	(548)	(400)	(603)	(537)
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
I wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen	40	48	27	40	38	37	39	49
I feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice	47	38	58	39	54	46	53	42
I am required to wear a life jacket by law	18	26	19	24	26	23	21	23
I have heard of situations where a life jacket has saved a life	15	21	19	18	23	16	21	16
I am not a good swimmer or do not know how to swim	8	5	9	7	7	6	6	7
I signed a pledge to wear a life jacket	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1
Other reasons	9	8	8	10	8	8	8	9

= Significantly higher than respective column(s) at 95 percent confidence level
 = Significantly higher when compared to prior year for respective number(s)



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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



The majority of those who “always or most of the time” wear a life jacket when boating (71 percent) indicate that they do so because they **“feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it’s a safe practice.”** Those who “sometimes or rarely” wear a life jacket tend to **“wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or is expected to worsen.”** Reasons for wearing life jackets are consistent to prior years.

Reasons for Wearing Life Jackets

	2013 Wear Life Jacket			2014 Wear Life Jacket			2015 Wear Life Jacket			2016 Wear Life Jacket		
	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely									
<i>Number answering and excludes those who say "never wear":</i>	(294)	(156)	(136)	(311)	(134)	(107)	(562)	(239)	(159)	(648)	(300)	(203)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I wear a life jacket when conditions or weather is bad or expected to worsen	17	59	85	12	49	67	18	54	79	20	71	79
I feel safest when wearing a life jacket/it's a safe practice	69	26	5	74	31	6	72	33	4	71	24	7
I am required to wear a life jacket by law	36	10	6	30	10	8	35	13	6	32	9	10
I have heard of situations where a life jacket has saved a life	23	20	4	19	21	10	22	20	9	23	19	6
I am not a good swimmer or do not know how to swim	10	6	2	9	10	1	8	6	3	9	5	2
I signed a pledge to wear a life jacket	3	1	2	4	2	0	3	1	1	3	1	0
Other reasons	5	17	8	3	12	21	4	15	10	6	11	12

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- = Significantly higher when compared to prior year for respective number(s)

Other reasons for wearing life jackets are safety, water sports, and to set a good example. See Appendix C (pages 34-36) for full list of verbatim comments.



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Reasons for Not Wearing Life Jackets

“A life jacket is uncomfortable” is most often selected as the reason for not wearing a life jacket (45 percent). Those who wear a life jacket “most of the time” are most likely to indicate they “forget to wear it or just don’t think about wearing one” on those occasions when they did not wear one (34 percent), while “a life jacket is uncomfortable” mentions increased from 32 percent in 2015 to 41 percent in 2016.

Reasons for Not Wearing Life Jackets

	Total	Wear Life Jacket		
		Most of time	Sometimes	Rarely/Never
<i>Number answering and excludes those who say "always wear":</i>	(774)	(195)	(288)	(291)
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
A life jacket is uncomfortable	45	41	49	44
I am not required to wear one by law	28	14	27	38
I forget to wear it or just don’t think about wearing one	26	34	23	24
I don’t need to wear a life jacket because I’m a strong swimmer	14	6	13	22
I’m not asked to wear a life jacket by the boat owner or someone else	9	5	10	11
A life jacket is not stylish or “cool”	4	1	4	6
I don’t want to spend money on a life jacket or can’t afford one	2	1	1	2
Other reasons	16	23	15	13

 = Significantly higher than respective column(s) at 95 percent confidence level
 = Significantly higher than low est respective number at 95 percent confidence level

Other reasons for not wearing life jackets include “too hot” and “conditions do not warrant it.” See Appendix C (pages 34-36) for full list of verbatim comments.



Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Boating Safety Attitudes

Almost all of the participants (96 percent) agree with the statement, **“I try to boat safely and responsibly at all times.”**

The statements with the least agreement are **“It is important for me as a boater to encourage others to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing”** (68 percent), **“I have not been involved in any situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful”** (68 percent), and **“I am a very strong swimmer”** (69 percent).

Compared to last year, significant increases are noted on many items, which might be partly attributed to having the description of the Wear It! Pledge in the survey. The highest scores are among boaters at high campaign activity locations.

Boating Safety Attitudes (%Strongly Agree/Agree Somewhat)

	Total			2013 Campaign Activity			2014 Campaign Activity			2015 Campaign Activity			2016 Campaign Activity			
	2013	2014	2015	2016	None	Medium	High	None	Medium	High	None	Medium	High	None	Medium	High
	(678)	(605)	(1072)	(1253)	(327)	(199)	(152)	(180)	(131)	(294)	(507)	(376)	(189)	(448)	(565)	(240)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total sample size:																
I try to boat safely and responsibly at all times	97	96	96	96	98	95	97	95	95	98	97	96	93	97	96	95
I believe drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets	88	86	85	91	88	86	90	88	68	94	84	85	85	88	92	95
I worry about other boaters and their unsafe practices	85	88	84	86	81	86	95	80	83	94	82	86	89	85	84	92
I believe the Wear It! pledge is an effective way to increase use of life jackets	73	71	67	79	71	76	71	70	67	91	64	69	71	80	75	85
I have NOT been involved in any situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful or needed	66	62	60	68	70	62	62	62	66	61	63	54	64	66	61	89
I am a very strong swimmer	61	64	68	69	62	61	57	67	62	63	65	65	78	70	63	83
It is important for me as a boater to encourage others to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing	52	60	61	68	44	59	59	53	48	70	58	62	64	65	68	72

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Note: In 2016, “or needed” was added to the statement: “I have NOT been involved in any situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful or needed.”



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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Safe boating practices are highest among those aware of the campaign/logo and those wearing their life jackets most often as shown in the following two tables. More boaters agree with the statements this year than prior years, perhaps due to having the Wear It! Pledge description in the survey.

Boating Safety Attitudes (%Strongly Agree/Agree Somewhat)

	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo		Aware of Campaign/Logo	
	Yes (356)	No/Unsure (318)	Yes (357)	No/Unsure (248)	Yes (582)	No/Unsure (478)	Yes (647)	No/Unsure (593)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I try to boat safely and responsibly at all times	98	96	96	97	98	94	97	96
I believe drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets	89	87	91	80	89	80	93	89
I worry about other boaters and their unsafe practices	91	79	91	83	91	76	89	83
I believe the Wear It! pledge is an effective way to increase use of life jackets	73	-	81	-	78	-	86	71
I have NOT been involved in any situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful or needed	62	71	61	64	64	56	68	69
I am a very strong swimmer	59	63	66	61	67	68	71	68
It is important for me as a boater to encourage others to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing	64	38	69	46	72	48	76	60

= Significantly higher than respective column(s) at 95 percent confidence level
 = Significantly higher when compared to prior year for respective number(s)

Note: "I believe the Wear It! Pledge is an effective way to increase use of life jackets" asked in 2016, given that pledge description was provided in survey.



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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Boating Safety Attitudes (%Strongly Agree/Agree Somewhat)

	2013 Wear Life Jacket			2014 Wear Life Jacket			2015 Wear Life Jacket			2016 Wear Life Jacket		
	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely/Never									
Total sample size:	(297)	(158)	(222)	(314)	(135)	(153)	(567)	(242)	(261)	(657)	(303)	(293)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I try to boat safely and responsibly at all times	98	94	98	97	96	95	97	94	95	98	94	95
I believe drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets	96	86	79	91	88	76	92	83	71	96	90	81
I worry about other boaters and their unsafe practices	88	83	83	89	88	84	88	85	77	88	87	82
I believe the Wear It! pledge is an effective way to increase use of life jackets	89	63	49	83	82	72	75	65	50	85	78	66
I have NOT been involved in any situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful or needed	60	61	77	58	61	71	59	58	66	67	67	73
I am a very strong swimmer	61	56	63	63	64	65	65	67	74	68	67	76
It is important for me as a boater to encourage others to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing	71	47	29	78	50	32	82	49	28	87	60	34

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Ways to Motivate Boaters to Wear Life Jackets

Having “a life jacket that was more comfortable or less bulky” (44 percent) or “a law requiring boaters to wear life jackets” (42 percent) would motivate some boaters to wear life jackets. “Having a law” dropped significantly as a motivator from 56 percent in 2015 to 37 percent in 2016.

	Motivators to Wear Life Jackets											
	Total				2013 Type of Boat		2014 Type of Boat		2015 Type of Boat		2016 Type of Boat	
	2013	2014	2015	2016	PWC/Manual	Others	PWC/Manual	Others	PWC/Manual	Others	PWC/Manual	Others
<i>Number answering (excludes those who say "always wear" for 2015):</i>	(678)	(596)	(703)	(808)	(135)	(524)	(132)	(439)	(89)	(614)	(154)	(654)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A law requiring boaters to wear life jackets	54	45	44	42	62	51	44	46	56	43	37	43
If I had a life jacket that was more comfortable or less bulky	34	37	33	44	36	32	33	39	44	32	49	43
Being educated on boat safety and the use of life jackets	28	41	27	23	42	25	52	37	35	26	27	22
Hearing or seeing reminders to wear a life jacket	28	30	25	29	38	26	31	30	37	23	28	30
If I had a life jacket that was easy to use/wear	24	27	21	26	24	24	28	26	30	20	32	25
I had a prior boating experience that convinced me	12	18	17	15	17	11	16	19	25	16	16	14
Signing a pledge card agreeing to wear a life jacket	11	14	9	8	14	11	17	13	20	7	10	7
If life jackets were provided for free	11	20	12	13	19	10	29	17	19	11	23	11
Seeing well-known celebrities or athletes wearing life jackets when boating	8	7	6	7	15	6	11	6	15	4	8	6
If I had a life jacket that was more stylish	6	7	7	7	11	4	10	7	12	6	12	6
Nothing/None	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	2	3	2
Did not answer question	4	1	3	4	1	5	0	2	2	3	5	3
Other responses	7	5	5	5	6	7	8	4	6	5	3	6

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Having “A life jacket that was more comfortable or less bulky” or having “A law requiring boaters to wear life jackets” would be the biggest motivators for those who “sometimes, rarely, or never” wear life jackets. Among these less frequent boaters, having more comfortable and less bulky life jackets is a greater motivator this year versus last year. “Hearing or seeing reminders to wear a life jacket” is also a top motivator among those who “most of the time or sometimes” wear life jackets. See Appendix C (pages 34- 36) for full list of verbatim comments.

Motivators to Wear Life Jackets

	2013 Wear Life Jacket			2014 Wear Life Jacket			2015 Wear Life Jacket			2016 Wear Life Jacket		
	Most (125)	Sometimes (158)	Rarely/Never (222)	Most (104)	Sometimes (135)	Rarely/Never (150)	Most (206)	Sometimes (237)	Rarely/Never (260)	Most (212)	Sometimes (303)	Rarely/Never (293)
Number answering (excludes "always wear"):												
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A law requiring boaters to wear life jackets	50	54	54	30	50	49	41	43	48	43	40	44
If I had a life jacket that was more comfortable or less bulky	34	34	34	42	46	42	31	36	33	35	50	44
Being educated on boat safety and the use of life jackets	34	25	10	51	30	21	44	24	17	36	22	15
Hearing or seeing reminders to wear a life jacket	39	24	15	35	31	15	43	23	12	40	34	17
If I had a life jacket that was easy to use/wear	24	25	22	34	24	28	22	25	17	27	30	22
I had a prior boating experience that convinced me	12	10	10	17	17	16	16	18	17	12	17	15
Signing a pledge card agreeing to wear a life jacket	18	10	5	12	17	10	13	9	4	10	9	6
If life jackets were provided for free	19	6	5	20	21	12	17	11	9	21	12	10
Seeing well-known celebrities or athletes wearing life jackets when boating	15	5	3	6	3	3	9	6	3	15	5	2
If I had a life jacket that was more stylish	9	3	4	7	8	6	9	7	5	5	8	8
Nothing/None	2	1	5	0	0	4	0	2	3	0	2	4
Did not answer question	0	3	7	1	2	1	4	3	2	4	3	4
Other responses	6	6	8	4	4	4	3	5	7	3	5	7

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Participant Profile: Boating

Frequency of Boating

Participants are boating more often than prior years, with 35 percent indicating they have been boating “more often” and only 19 percent indicating “less often.” No significant differences are noted by campaign activity.

Frequency of Boating

	Total	Campaign Activity		
		None	Medium	High
<i>Number answering:</i>	(1229)	(440)	(550)	(239)
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
More often	35	36	34	33
About as often	47	46	45	51
Less often	19	18	21	16

Type of Boat

About three out of 10 participants used a fishing boat most recently (31 percent). A good mix of other types of boat users also participated. Boaters in locations with low campaign activity were significantly more likely to be using a fishing boat (43 percent) than other boaters. Boaters in locations with high campaign activity were more likely to be using a sailboat (37 percent). Those in medium campaign activity locations were more likely to be using a personal watercraft or manually propelled vessel (28 percent). Please note, life jacket wear requirements are associated with PWCs and manually propelled vessels.

Boat Most Recently Used

	Total	Campaign Activity		
		None	Medium	High
<i>Number answering:</i>	(1253)	(448)	(565)	(240)
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Fishing boat (not commercial)	31	43	25	23
Cabin motor boat	20	12	24	25
Sail boat	18	13	13	37
Open motor boat	12	15	10	14
Personal watercraft	10	13	10	0
Manually propelled vessel	10	4	18	1

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Boat Ownership

Seven out of ten participants own a boat (70 percent). Participants in locations with medium campaign activity are significantly less likely to own a boat (62 percent) than those from other locations. Those who are aware of the campaign are more likely to own a boat (75 percent). No significant differences in boat ownership are noted by usage of life jackets.

Boat Ownership

	<u>Total</u>
	<u>%</u>
Yes	70
Campaign Activity	
None	78
Medium	62
High	74
Aware of Campaign	
Yes	75
No/Unsure	65
Wear Life Jacket	
Always/Most	68
Sometimes	74
Rarely/Never	73

= Significantly higher than respective column(s) at 95 percent confidence level

= Significantly higher than low est respective number at 95 percent confidence level



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Life Jacket Ownership

About nine out of 10 participants (91 percent) own a life jacket (91 percent in 2015; 94 percent in 2014; 89 percent in 2013). About one-fourth (23 percent) own both inherently buoyant and inflatable life jackets, which is similar to last year (25 percent). Those aware of the campaign are more likely to have inflatable life jackets (37 percent versus 22 percent) than those not aware of the campaign. In addition, participants from medium campaign activity locations are also more likely to have inflatable life jackets (38 percent) than others. Almost three-fourths of boat non-owners (73 percent) do own a life jacket (up from 65 percent in 2015, similar to 76 percent in 2014, and up from 57 percent in 2013).

Life Jacket Ownership

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Campaign Activity</u>			<u>Type of Boat</u>		<u>Aware of Campaign/Logo</u>		<u>Own Boat</u>	
		<u>None</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>PWC/Manual</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No/Unsure</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<i>Number answering:</i>	(1223)	(439)	(555)	(239)	(395)	(838)	(639)	(589)	(861)	(364)
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Inherently buoyant life jackets	62	72	50	72	69	58	56	68	67	51
Inflatable life jackets	6	3	9	7	6	6	7	5	5	9
Both types	23	21	29	14	13	28	30	17	27	13
Do not own a life jacket	9	4	12	7	11	7	7	10	1	27

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Participant Profile: Demographics

Gender

Participants from high campaign activity locations and those aware of the campaign tend to skew male.

	Total	Campaign Activity			Aware of Campaign/Logo		Wear Life Jacket		
		None	Medium	High	Yes	No/Unsure	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely/Never
Number answering:	(1220)	(436)	(545)	(239)	(638)	(580)	(630)	(298)	(292)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	64	61	62	75	69	59	64	67	62
Female	36	39	38	25	31	41	36	33	38

Age

Those in high campaign activity locations tend to skew younger, which was also the case in 2015. About one-half (52 percent) of the “sometimes” wear life jacket users are 45 to 64 years.

	Total	Campaign Activity			Aware of Campaign/Logo		Wear Life Jacket			Type of Boat	
		None	Medium	High	Yes	No/Unsure	Always/Most	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	PWC/Manual	Others
Number answering:	(1235)	(441)	(555)	(239)	(638)	(590)	(645)	(297)	(293)	(395)	(840)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
18 to 24 years	11	9	8	19	10	12	10	8	15	17	8
25 to 34	19	16	19	24	18	20	23	12	17	30	13
35 to 44	18	21	16	17	17	18	19	17	17	16	19
45 to 54	20	22	18	24	21	20	18	28	18	17	22
55 to 64	19	22	21	10	18	21	15	24	23	12	22
65 years or older	13	10	18	6	16	10	15	12	11	8	15

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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



States Surveyed

Surveys were collected from 14 different states, with more than one-half of the surveys being collected from Tennessee, Ohio and Oregon. As shown below, compared to 2015, surveys were not collected in New Mexico, Rhode Island and New Hampshire, but were collected in five new states: Oregon, Florida, West Virginia, Vermont and Texas.

State of Residence				
State	# Collected in 2013	# Collected in 2014	# Collected in 2015	# Collected in 2016
TN	161	169	144	284
OH	-	-	182	260
OR	-	-	-	174
FL	69	-	-	116
AZ	-	17	164	85
KY	-	43	51	82
NY	127	55	70	46
CT	-	-	66	43
WV	-	-	-	39
LA	25	26	41	36
VT	-	-	-	32
VA	148	268	46	21
CA	-	-	35	21
TX	-	-	-	14
NM	-	-	180	-
RI	-	-	78	-
NH	-	-	15	-
NJ	80	27	-	-
IN	38	-	-	-
OK	30	-	-	-



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Wear It! Campaign Awareness Survey



Appendix A: Number of Surveys by Specific Location

Location	State	# in 2013	# in 2014	# in 2015	# in 2016	Activity
Percy Priest	TN	42	85	33	123	High
Old Hickory Lake	TN	-	26	65	80	High
Lake Graham	TN	-	-	-	23	High
Canandaigua Lake	NY	-	-	11*	14	High
Others	Multiple	110 (FL, NJ, TN)	183 (VA)	4 (NY)	-	High
Total High		152	294	189	240	
Lake Erie - Cleveland	OH	-	-	-	127	Medium
Willamette Park	OR	-	-	-	100	Medium
Nolin Lake	KY	-	-	51	82	Medium
Detroit Lake	OR	-	-	-	74	Medium
Lake Pontchartrain	LA	-	-	35	36	Medium
Cheat Lake	WV	-	-	-	26	Medium
Millerton Lake	CA	-	-	35	21	Medium
Lake Anna	VA	-	-	-	21	Medium
Erie Canal	NY	-	-	40	19	Medium
Lake Erie - Avalon Lake	OH	-	-	-	19	Medium
Summersville Lake	WV	-	-	-	11	Medium
Garland	TX	-	-	-	9	Medium
Mentor	OH	-	-	-	6	Medium
Irondequoit Bay	NY	-	-	-	5	Medium
Dallas	TX	-	-	-	5	Medium
Seneca Lake	NY	-	-	-	4	Medium
Others	Multiple	199 (IN, NY, OK, TN, VA)	131 (NY, TN, AZ, VA)	201 (NM, CT, VA, OH, NY, LA)	-	Medium
Total Medium		199	131	376	565	



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Location	State	# in 2013	# in 2014	# in 2015	# in 2016	Activity
Lake Pleasant	AZ	-	-	87*	85	None
Indian Lake	OH	-	-	50	55	None
Norris Lake	TN	53	39	46	58	None
NE Ohio - Fairport	OH	-	-	-	53	None
Whitney's Fish Camp	FL	-	-	-	51	None
Coventry Lake	CT	-	-	-	38	None
Waterbury	VT	-	-	-	28	None
Lakeshore Boat Ramp	FL	-	-	-	27	None
Green Cove Springs	FL	-	-	-	20	None
Knights Boat Ramp	FL	-	-	-	12	None
Ft. Walton	FL	-	-	-	6	None
Niantic River	CT	-	-	-	5	None
Hudson River	NY	-	-	3*	4	None
Green River Reservoir	VT	-	-	-	4	None
Sutton Lake	WV	-	-	-	2	None
Others	Multiple	274 (NJ, NY, VA, LA)	141 (KY, NJ, VA, LA)	411 (OH, RI, AZ, NM, CT, VA, NH, NY)	-	None
Total No Activity		327	180	507	448	
TOTAL Collected		678	605	1072	1253	

***Changes for 2016:**

- Canandaigua Lake was Medium in 2015 (n=11) and High in 2016
- Lake Pleasant was High in 2015 (n=87) and None/Low in 2016
- Hudson River was Medium in 2015 (n=3) and None/Low in 2016



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Appendix B

Follow-Up Telephone Interviews

Werth completed a research study among 1,253 boaters for NSBC in order to determine and quantify the impact of the campaign on life jacket wear attitudes and behaviors and gain insights that might be helpful in improving the campaign in the future.

At the end of the self-administered surveys, boaters were asked if they were willing to complete a follow-up telephone interview. In order to gain additional insights and suggestions for the campaign, four (4) in-depth telephone interviews were conducted with men and women from Ohio, West Virginia and Florida who own or last used a fishing boat, cabin motorboat and open motorboat. These boat owners, when they had completed the survey, had indicated that they wear their life jackets “rarely” or “sometimes.” Each interview took about 30 minutes.

Executive Summary

When boating, participants in these interviews feel relaxed, free, youthful, happy and centered. They boat alone, with family or friends at all times of the day and days of the week. One participant also boats to and from work. The participants interviewed spend a minimum of one hour and a maximum of 20 hours at a time on the water. They tend to boat at least twice a week, with one boater indicating every day and going out several times in one day. When asked what they like most about boating, they explained:

- *Everything! We just like being out on the water. I like the freedom of it.*
- *Peaceful. I love the sun. There are beautiful areas within driving distance, of driving [boat] with a trailer.*
- *It's the only hobby I have. It's just a relaxing requirement of my life.*
- *Fishing: It's my favorite thing to do. We love to fish.*

Participants recognize the safety reasons for using life jackets, especially when conditions warrant it (rough weather, rough water, stranded, capsized) or when children are aboard.

• Safety Reasons

- *They're absolutely intended to save lives and I'm safety minded. I always have something right next to me when I'm running the boat. It's a functional piece of equipment that's required for boating that I'll always have.*
- *I like knowing that I have them. Sometimes I sit on them. They will save a life. I like having them if we get stranded, capsized; I can throw one on my (seven year old) son. There's no law requiring him to wear it [in West Virginia].*
- *It's just the confidence you get that you won't drown if you fall in. It's nothing more than a tool that you use in fishing and boating. I like everyone to wear them. I don't want to lose a life if someone falls off without a life jacket on.*
- *I fish a lot at night by myself and I would rather have the life preserver on. They can save a life. I don't want to drown.*



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- **Conditions**

- *The Fourth of July weekend, it was pretty rough and I was in the back of the boat wearing one, just in case. If there's a higher probability of craziness happening, i.e., six-foot waves.*
- *If my boat were in trouble or somehow a storm got kicked up.*

- **Children**

- *I tell my girls (10 years and 4 years old) that it's a law and they have to wear them until 12 years old.*
- *Small children will always wear them if you make them do it, they do it. I require all children to have them on.*

Two of the participants have become advocates for the inflatables.

- *They [life jackets] have improved themselves by 100 percent by going to the new inflatables that you can wear all the time and not be cumbersome. People will actually wear them because they are not a pain in the butt. Before we never wore them because it restricts your activities; they are hot.*
- *We love them [inflatables]. After we did the survey, we got the ones that go around the waist. I had never used one until we got these. Now, [we wear them] all the time. We got the low profile ones and we like it.*

Participants further explained that others might wear life jackets because of the Wear It! campaign, requirements of tournaments, or if they are uncomfortable on the water, do not know how to swim, have had a personal experience or know someone who drowned.

- *Either they listen to the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Wear It! campaign or they are uncomfortable on the water; maybe, they are not as comfortable with their swimming skills.*
- *They are not as confident in their water skills as I am. Honestly, personal experience: they might have known someone who drowned. Something personal happened to them.*
- *Not knowing how to swim, all the grandmas want all their grandbabies to have them on, or if they are elderly or overweight.*
- *Life jackets are required for bass tournaments.*

However, boaters explained their reasons for not wearing life jackets: uncomfortable, cumbersome, bulky, and hot. One boater also felt they look ridiculous and felt confident in her swimming ability.

- *We went to a waterpark and the adults were also required to wear them. They were bulky and hot. On the 35 foot, I usually do not wear it.*
- *They are uncomfortable, look ridiculous, awkward and squish my boobs. We like to have fun and the life jacket feels obnoxious. They get wet; they don't dry out. It's not a good feeling, especially if they ride up. I'm not afraid of anything, may be arrogance on my part.*
- *The orange ones can be bulky sometimes, uncomfortable. I make a lot of casts [fishing] and it's cumbersome to cast.*



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In their opinion, others' reasons for not wearing life jackets are: not cool to wear them, the inflatables are too expensive, and the conditions do not warrant them.

- *I don't see boaters going out wearing life jackets. I hate to say this; it's not the cool thing to do. Most people are more concerned about going out and having fun!*
- *Looks goofy.*
- *They [good inflatables] are pretty expensive. I didn't know how expensive they were until I got one: \$79.99 versus others cost \$10-\$15.*

When asked about the Wear It! campaign, two of the four participants were aware of it and support the program.

- *I like it [Wear It! campaign]. I think it's a great thing. Boating safety to me is huge. I see too often things when I'm out on the water. It's a way to raise awareness of doing the life jackets. I saw it [pledge card] when one of the guys pulled it out after I did the survey. I was not asked to sign it, but probably would have signed it. It would have got me in the mindset of changing my ways. If someone signs a pledge card, they are more likely to follow through. It's not a guarantee, but it's more effective.*
- *It's all the right things to start. Anytime you make boaters aware, you think about why and it makes you take a step in the right direction. Unless they knew someone that drowned; that makes you think about it in the right direction. I've seen the pledge. You got to start somewhere.*

The other two participants were not aware of the Wear It! campaign before taking the survey. They had mixed reactions.

- *Being an American, we are a nation of personal choice. It doesn't matter how many videos, tragedies, it all comes down to personal choice. We don't like to wear them. I don't believe in helmet laws [either]. It comes down to personal safety, personal choice and personal comfort. Without being a law, you aren't going to get the results you want. With a law, water enjoyment and participation will go down significantly if it were forced upon boaters. You don't have to boat versus drive and wear a seat belt.*
- *I like it. It's the awareness and the safety. I signed it [pledge card], have the survey. The awareness [of inflatables] made me want it! We wear our life vests now.*

Participants offered some suggestions for increasing life jacket usage, such as having inflatables or more wearability, having better styles, making wearing them more mainstream, increasing public awareness, hearing stories / having a personal story, starting young, and introducing laws.

- *I'm looking at purchasing a couple of inflatables. They are obviously less bulky. I could then get more adults to wear them.*
- *The thin inflatable vest: it's not even noticeable. If their price were to go down, then I would wear it more often. They are so expensive and beyond most people's budget. If readily available and could get the prices down to the same prices as the orange ones, that would be the key.*
- *Trying to make it [wearing life jackets] more mainstream by the Wear It! campaign. [Having] an open house at coast guard station to talk about the importance of safety. I think it's a lack of understanding of the severity of issues. More public awareness: when people start hearing actual cases, hearing some stories, hearing training of coast guard, hearing capabilities of coast guard... great awareness of the bigger picture!*



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- *Something that could motivate [others/me] is if they were involved in a water incident. My father-in-law two years ago jumped into the water without wearing a life jacket to get a hat and then needed rescuing. My brother-in-law jumped in after him to rescue him.*
- *A tragedy, if something happened in my personal life. Tragedy is definitely convincing. If he had been wearing a life jacket, he might not have passed.*
- *Better design, more wearability.*
- *If it's stylish, they might wear it in some cases.*
- *I definitely think if you start young and you make it a lifestyle choice, it would be a choice they would adopt and it would become a habit for them to put on a life jacket. Then, as an adult it would be a choice they would make. [Comment from WV participant; no laws in WV]*
- *Making it a law. I think you have to wear them up to 15 years old [in FL]. We have to have them on the boat, but we don't have to be wearing them.*



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Appendix C: Verbatim Comments

What are your reasons for wearing a life jacket? Other responses are:

- A lot of boat traffic
- After dark
- Always wear one if I plan on going skiing and always have it within quick reach
- Always wear them offshore
- Boarding
- Child protection
- Comfort
- Common sense (3 mentions)
- Company policy
- Docking: always in a dinghy (2 mentions)
- Doing a watercraft
- During water sports; kids always wear jackets
- Example for my children
- Foredeck
- Good example for lads, etc.
- Good practice to always wear one
- Having one and not wearing it could be disastrous if you run into trouble
- I'm afraid of open water
- I am with a boating club that requires it
- I get made to
- I grew up on the lake and know the dangers; I have always worn life jackets
- I wear a jacket when I ski
- I wear one when going into water to play
- I wear one when I feel the situation warrants it. We keep them near.
- If water is choppy
- I'm a good swimmer and only wear a life jacket when on board. When kayaking, I always wear it.
- I'm old
- In locks or when taking another boat in tow
- Kids always
- Looks cool!
- Lots of boat traffic
- Modeling for students
- My mother makes me wear mine; I'm 65
- Night
- Ocean (2 mentions)
- On river/whitewater
- Only when required
- Only when skiing
- Only while in water
- Out alone or at night
- Parents
- Peace of mind
- Professionalism, seamanship
- Rules
- Sailing at night
- Set example for grandkids
- Set example for kids
- Some boat policy
- Stupid not to
- To assist my dog if we capsize (he wears one too!)
- To keep warm
- To provide a good example
- Tubing (5 mentions)
- Wake boarding and surfing (2 mentions)
- Water ski (4 mentions)
- Water sports only or with small children on the boat
- Water temps <90F All times
- When apparently bad weather or simple handle
- When asked to
- When boarding (4 mentions)
- When boat is running
- When driving the channel
- When docking, locking, inclement weather
- When in the water/swimming (5 mentions)
- When lots of motorboats are out
- When motor is running
- When my parents tell me to
- When needed
- When running the channel
- When the captain makes me
- When there is a lot of boat traffic
- When operating at night or low light conditions
- Young passengers



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What are your reasons for not wearing a life jacket? Other responses are:

- Always wear one (21 mentions)
- Always wear one while sporting/in water or swimming/only in water (7 mentions)
- As needed
- Because my safety is my own concern not the government's
- Boat has high railings (2 mentions)
- Boat too large
- Boat/weather is safe (2 mentions)
- Boating under extremely safe conditions, fine weather (4 mentions)
- Bulky
- Conditions do not warrant at the time/calm water/ weather; feel safe when calm water; light wind conditions (11 mentions)
- Comfortable with swimming, but will wear during rough conditions
- Confinement
- Didn't know new law
- Don't bother
- Don't have one
- Don't want tan lines (lame)
- Flat water; small lake with no power boats
- For the same reason why I don't wear a helmet
- Gets hot/heat/too hot (24 mentions)
- Gets in the way (of racing) (3 mentions)
- Getting out of boat/marina
- Hard to wear on sailboat
- I always have one with me
- In a safe location
- I feel safe under most conditions in my boat
- I know when the time is right
- I rarely don't wear one
- I take it off when we are not driving
- I travel on the canal – not far from shore
- If it is at all bad, I always wear one when water temp is under 60
- In a closed boat
- Inhibit movement
- Inward, do
- It's available at a moment's notice
- It's often not necessary on the boat down
- I've been close enough to dying multiple times, what's one more
- Just don't
- Just floating
- Loading
- Mobility/no moving around (2 mentions)
- More concerned with my kids wearing them
- Mostly at bay
- No good reason
- No good reason not to wear one
- No reason, very silly
- No wind, flat water, hot outside
- None (5 mentions)
- Not a good choice
- Not always swimming
- Not available (2 mentions)
- Not cloudy
- Not easy to wear one when fishing, but always while the boat is in motion
- Not inside cabin
- Not on the water
- Not sure
- On a lake fishing/relax
- On a power boat, don't need one
- Only on a big boat
- Pontoon boat (2 mentions)
- Private lake, also do not wear racing large sailboats
- Racing
- Really hot day
- Safety
- Sailing – gets in the way of mourning around and performing tasks
- Short movements
- Size of boat
- Sometimes it is more comfy
- Sometimes it is safer not to overheat because of jacket with calm hot conditions and certified rescue swimmer
- Son
- Style of boating
- Sun lines/tan lines (7 mentions)
- There is no reason not to put one on
- To avoid overheating (which is dangerous)
- Too hot – break-out
- Uncomfortable for large breasts
- Various
- Water calm and in small boat
- Wear most of time
- Weather dictates
- When anchored
- When changing wet suit
- When conditions require
- When I'm in the boat
- Why wear one unless conditions warrant it?
- Worn in bad conditions



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Which of the following, if any, do you think would convince you to wear a life jacket more often? Other responses are:

- Always make kids wear their life jackets, even my teenagers
- As needed
- Bad weather (2 mentions)
- Comfortable, easy-to-sail life jackets, were more affordable or required to be provided by boat owner
- Do not sail / don't boat (2 mentions)
- Don't know
- I at least always have it with me
- I do when weather dictates and always at night offshore
- I know when the time is right
- I wear a life jacket when conditions on the water require one for safety
- I wear it now
- I won't, I'm an adult
- If I could afford inflatables for everyone
- If I could get a good tan while kayaking
- If I were a quad amputee
- If I wouldn't overheat with it on and this endangers myself in an unintended way
- If it was cooler
- If the captain required it
- Just getting in the habit like seat belts while driving; needs to be second nature
- Life jacket patrols
- My boat is large and not required. If severe weather threatens, it's on. Kids required to always wear one.
- On a kayak, I always wear it
- One that is cooler (2 mentions)
- Only wear for water sports
- Paddle boarding in deeper areas
- Personal preference and conditions
- Ridiculous
- Rough conditions on lake
- See cold water boot-camp video – remarkable!
- Seen results of what happens when you don't – shock value
- Severe conditions
- Show conditions (usual aid)
- Too moist
- Type of boat and conditions
- Usually
- We require all being towed being in the boat to wear a life jacket at all times
- We wear them often but none of them convince me to wear it every moment (2 mentions)
- Wear when appropriate (2 mentions)
- Weather conditions – rapids, etc. (2 mentions)
- When necessary and age limits (2 mentions)
- When the weather dictates use I always wear one (2 mentions)



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