

# Boaters aged 31 to 40 now need to have a boater education card

Boaters age 31 – 40 are now required to carry a boater education card when operating powerboats greater than 10 hp, according to the Oregon State Marine Board. While more than 12,000 operators in this age group have already gotten their card, an estimated 20,000 have not yet done so.

"The number of applications for the card has definitely picked up in the last few weeks," said Ashley Massey,

Mandatory Boater Education Program Coordinator for the Marine Board. "But if volumes of applications come in on the first nice days of spring, we're concerned there could be delays. People should be completing classes and getting their cards now so they won't miss any boating opportunities this spring or summer."

2003 was the first year of the Mandatory Boater Education card requirement. The law

applied to all boaters 30 and younger last year. The Marine Board issued nearly 19,000 cards to this age group, putting compliance at above 90 percent. "Last year was outstanding, but we estimate we have nearly twice as many people to certify this year. We have a long way to go," says Massey. Citations for not carrying a card are \$94. Marine officers issued nearly 350 citations in 2003.

The boater education card

shows that the holder has completed a basic boater education course. The boater education law was enacted by the 1999 Oregon Legislature to reduce accidents, injuries and property damage on Oregon's increasingly crowded waterways. The Marine Board is phasing the requirement in by age. It applies to all boaters operating boats greater than 10 hp. The age requirement will increase to boaters age 41 – 45 in 2005,

46 to 50 in 2006, 51 to 60 in 2007, 61 to 70 in 2008 and all boaters in 2009.

For information on the program, or for available classroom and online courses, as well as equivalency exams for experienced boaters, check the Marine Board's website at <www.boatoregon.com> or call 503-378-8587.



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