



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

-----0-----

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

4611 Tutu Park Mall
Suite 300
St. Thomas, VI 00802
(340) 774-3320

45 Mars Hill, Frederiksted
St. Croix, VI 00840
(340) 773-1082
dpr.vi.gov



Office of the Commissioner

CONTACT: Jamal Nielsen, Media Relations Coordinator
jamal.nielsen@dpr.vi.gov

Thursday, May 15, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DPNR's Division of Environmental Enforcement Promotes Safe Boating
During National Safe Boating Week**

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), Division of Environmental Enforcement is proud to observe National Safe Boating Week, from May 18–24, 2025. This annual campaign, held just before the summer boating season, aims to promote safe and responsible boating practices throughout the territory.

As a partner in the national Safe Boating Campaign, the Division of Environmental Enforcement will be raising awareness on the importance of wearing life jackets and following safety guidelines while out on the water. In the past year alone, boating incidents have highlighted the urgent need for preventive measures that can protect lives.

"This week is about more than just awareness — it is about action," said Howard Forbes Sr., Director of the Division of Environmental Enforcement. "Wearing a life jacket, ensuring your vessel is seaworthy, and knowing the rules of the water are all essential for a safe and enjoyable boating experience."

The national campaign's theme, promoting safety and preparedness for all boaters. The campaign emphasizes the importance of wearing life jackets, taking boating safety courses and ensuring proper equipment checks. DPNR Enforcement encourages all boaters from novice to experienced to wear a properly fitted, U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket at all times while on the water. Statistics show that most drowning victims in boating accidents were not wearing life jackets.

Throughout the week, DPNR enforcement officers will be conducting free vessel safety checks, distributing educational materials, and engaging with the community at marinas and boat ramps across the territory. Residents and visitors are encouraged to join the effort by sharing photos using the hashtag #SafeBoatingWeek.

Boaters are also reminded to:

- Take a certified boating safety course
- Avoid alcohol while operating a vessel
- Stay informed about marine weather conditions
- Carry required safety equipment onboard

For more information on boating safety, contact the Division of Environmental Enforcement at 340.773.5774