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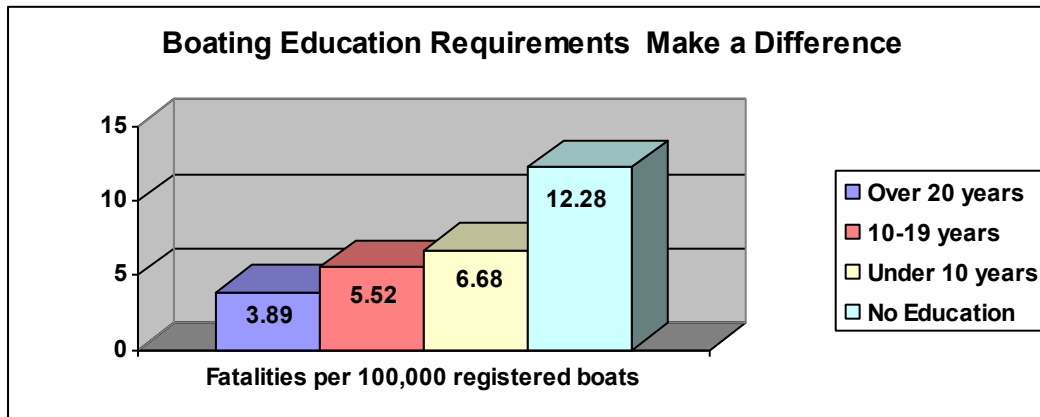
## Boating Education Requirements Do Make a Difference

**Lexington, Ky.** (February 1, 2007) – Education pays and saves lives, according to a new study completed by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA).

In a study of best practices in boating education conducted by NASBLA's Education Committee in the summer and fall of 2006, the association found that those states that have the longest history of boating education requirements also have the lowest average fatality rates of all the states. Also, the longer the boating education requirements have been in place, the lower the fatality rates have become. The states with no boating education requirements in place have the highest average fatality rates.

Emily King, NASBLA Education Committee member from Ohio, who led the study said, "Those of us who have worked in the boating education field for years have known intuitively that there is a correlation between education and lower fatalities, but now we have the data to prove it."

Currently 44 of the 50 states have one of three types of boating education requirement in place. These types range from requiring only a small segment of the population to complete a boating education course to requiring everyone in the state to complete a boating education course and be licensed before operating a boat.



Source: The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), 2007

Six states have had boating education requirements in place for more than 20 years. New York, which has had boating education requirements in place since 1960, has the longest history of any of the states in terms of boating education. The other five states are Michigan, with 40 years, Minnesota and Wisconsin both with 32 years, Illinois with 29 years, and North Dakota with 22 years. On average, these five states have a fatality rate per 100,000 registered boats of 3.89 persons.

Fifteen states have had boating education requirements in place for 10-19 years. Their average fatality rate per 100,000 registered boats is 5.52 persons, which is slightly higher than the previous group. The 23 states that have had boating education requirements in place for less than 10 years have an average fatality rate per 100,000 registered boats of 6.68 persons.

Six states (Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, South Dakota and Wyoming) have no boating education requirements in place. Their average number of fatalities per 100,000 registered boats is 12.28 persons. That is almost double the average fatality rate for the group of states that have most recently implemented boating education requirements and triple the rate for the group of states that have had boating education requirements for more than 20 years.

John Johnson, executive director of NASBLA, noted that NASBLA has been a leader in moving states to adopt mandatory boating education efforts. “These findings show that our work is paying off in lives saved.” Johnson added that this study should be a good impetus for those

states without education requirements to join the rest of their colleagues in reducing boating fatalities.

Three types of boating education requirement options are currently available for states to implement. NASBLA has a Model Act in place outlining one of these options: creating boating education requirements based on a born-on or -after date of the boater. The Model Act is being revised this year to show the preferred method of implementing boating education requirements: a phase-in approach to education. Using a phase-in approach to education will eventually encompass the entire population over a nominal period of time. The third education option targets only a specific age group of boaters (i.e., teens) and/or a specific segment of the boating population (i.e., personal watercraft users).

NASBLA is a nonprofit organization representing the boating authorities of all 50 states and the U.S. territories. Dedicated to reducing boating accidents, saving lives and helping to make boating safe and enjoyable for everyone on our nation's waterways, NASBLA is working to achieve seamless uniformity for boating laws from state-to-state. NASBLA encourages reciprocity of boating laws and establishes standards for boating safety education and boating law enforcement practices.

A copy of the results is available online at [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org).



**National Association of State Boating Law Administrators  
Best Practices in Boating Education Study Findings**

State Name	Implementation Year	Type of Boating Education in Place	2001-2005 Fatalities per 100,000 Boats
<b>More than 20 Years of Education Requirements in Place</b>			
New York	1960	Born-on date	4.64
Michigan	1967	Born-on date	3.16
Minnesota	1975	Teens	2.37
Wisconsin	1975	Teens	3.19
Illinois	1978	Teens	4.15
North Dakota	1985	Teens	5.84
			<b>Average: 3.89</b>
<b>10-19 Years of Education Requirements in Place</b>			
Massachusetts	1988	Teens	6.67
Maryland	1988	Born-on date	7.19
New Jersey	1988	Phase-in	5.63
Vermont	1991	Born-on date	3.66
Connecticut	1992	Everyone	3.86
Delaware	1994	Born-on date	2.69
Georgia	1994	Teens	4.15
Alabama	1994	Everyone	6.03
Montana	Passed in 1991, Effective in 1994	Teens	7.65
Indiana	1995	Teens	4.29
Utah	1995	Teens	7.93
Florida	1996	Teens	6.41
North Carolina	1997	Teens	4.58
Mississippi	1997	Born-on date	5.47
Texas	1997	Teens	6.54
			<b>Average: 5.52</b>
<b>Under 10 Years of Education Requirements in Place</b>			
South Carolina	1998	Teens	4.22
Virginia	1998	Teens	7.59
Kentucky	1998	Teens	7.72
Colorado	1998	Teens	8.12
Kansas	2000	Born-on date	4.30
Nebraska	2000	Teens	4.34
Iowa	2000	Teens	1.15
Ohio	2000	Born-on date	3.83

State Name	Implementation Year	Type of Boating Education in Place	2001-2005 Fatalities per 100,000 Boats
West Virginia	2001	Born-on date	8.39
Arkansas	2001	Born-on date	6.23
Rhode Island	2001	Born-on date	8.25
New Hampshire	2002	Phase-in	3.52
Louisiana	2003	Born-on date	12.85
Oregon	2003	Phase-in	7.67
Pennsylvania	2003	Born-on date	3.26
Nevada	2003	Born-on date	11.43
Hawaii	2005	Everyone	10.46
Tennessee	2005	Born-on date	6.88
Missouri	2005	Born-on date	5.20
Maine	2006	Teens	8.41
Oklahoma	2007	Teens	4.98
New Mexico	Passed in 2006, Effective in 2007	Born-on date	5.66
Washington	Passed in 2005, Effective in 2008	Phase-in	9.19
			<b>Average: 6.68</b>
<b>No Education Requirements in Place</b>			
South Dakota	n/a	None	4.90
Arizona	n/a	None	5.12
California	n/a	None	5.46
Idaho	n/a	None	7.76
Wyoming	n/a	None	12.18
Alaska	n/a	None	38.27
			<b>Average: 12.28</b>

**The National Association of State Boating Laws Administrators (NASBLA)  
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