



## The United Safe Boating Institute

*Filling special niches in the boating scene.*

by CAPTAIN WILLIAM GRISWOLD, USCG (RET.)  
President, United Safe Boating Institute

The United Safe Boating Institute (USBI) is an alliance of non-profit organizations united to provide a public service through preparation and distribution of focused boating educational information, funded by grants and/or public, private, and corporate contributions.

USBI's purpose is to attract grants to undertake specific projects that will enhance recreational boating safety. It was formed in the late 1980s by members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, the American Red Cross, the U.S. Sailing Association, and the Canadian Power Squadrons. The American Canoe Association also joined the group a few years ago.

### Targeted Initiatives

**Safety Tips for Anglers, Hunters, and Campers** is our most popular pamphlet. This 16-page publication outlines boating safety, first aid, aids to navigation, and navigation rules, with illustrations covering life jacket use, the dangers of alcohol and hypothermia, and equipment you should have on board.

**Global Maritime Distress and Safety System for Recreational Boaters** is a booklet that presents an overview of the GMDSS system, sea areas, and mandatory requirements for different class vessels. It

outlines digital selective calling radio equipment, the various classes of radios, and their ability to send distress alert messages to coastal stations and other DSC-equipped vessels in their immediate area.

The booklet explains the interface these radios have with the Global Positioning System, enabling the radio to transmit its position and a maritime mobile service identity number, which identifies the boat's owner and the boat's description. It also includes a short discourse on the capabilities of the 406-MHz emergency position indicating radio beacon.

**Which Life Jacket for You?** is a poster that displays pictures and brief descriptions of popular life jackets appropriate for use in various boating activities.

It is designed to be placed in boating stores or departments near the life jacket counter to guide shoppers regarding the best jacket for their intended activity. It is hoped that having a more comfortable life jacket will increase wear.

### Future Plans

Upcoming initiatives include revising the old **Five Tons and No Brakes**, a short booklet aimed at houseboat operators. Normally, houseboat renters are not expe-

rienced boaters, and this sheet serves to acquaint them with issues they might encounter.

We are also looking at a means to capture reasons why vessels fail the voluntary vessel

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:



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safety check to guide future educational efforts.

### About the author:

Captain Griswold served 37 years in the military, retiring in 1993. His last assignment was Chief Director of the Coast Guard Auxiliary at USCG headquarters. Since retirement, in addition to being a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, he has served as chair of the National Safe Boating Council and is currently president of the United Safe Boating Institute.