

# Smart Harbors

Raising the Standard

Spring 2021

## Why become a Virginia Clean Boater?

By adopting pollution prevention measures, Virginia Clean Boaters can take satisfaction in knowing they are doing their part to:

- Keep Virginia waterways clean.
- Preserve our waterways for the future.
- Learn and teach clean boating habits.



## Please Send Us Your News!

Do you have a new and exciting method for managing recyclables at your facility? Are there any regulatory items that you would like addressed? Has your facility won an award, hired a new manager or purchased a fancy pump-out boat?

If you have any news that you would like included in the Clean Marina Newsletter, Smart Harbors, please let us know. This is a quarterly newsletter with the next issue scheduled for Summer 2021 and we would like to include information from the marina community.

Comments or questions please email VCMP: [askVCMP@vims.edu](mailto:askVCMP@vims.edu) or call 804-684-7768.



## Coast Guard Announces New Law Requiring Use of Engine Cut-off Switches

WASHINGTON, March 10th, 2021— Operators of recreational vessels less than 26 feet in length will be required to use an engine cut-off switch (ECOS) and associated ECOS link (ECOSL) as of April 1, 2021, as the U.S. Coast Guard implements a law passed by Congress.

The ECOS and ECOSL prevent runaway vessels and the threats they pose. The ECOSL attaches the vessel operator to a switch that shuts off the engine if the operator is displaced from the helm. The ECOSL is usually a lanyard-style cord that attaches to an ECOS either in close proximity to the helm or on the outboard motor itself if the vessel is operated by a tiller. When enough tension is applied, the ECOSL disengages from the ECOS and the motor is automatically shut down. Wireless ECOS have recently been developed and are also approved for use. These devices use an electronic “fob” that is carried by the operator and senses when it is submerged in water, activating the ECOS and turning the engine off. Wireless devices are available on the after-market and are beginning to become available as manufacturer-installed options.

Each year the Coast Guard receives reports of recreational vessel operators who fall or are suddenly and unexpectedly thrown out of their boat. These events have led to injuries and deaths. During these incidents the boat continues to operate with no one in control of the

vessel, leaving the operator stranded in the water as the boat continues on course, or the boat begins to circle the person in the water eventually striking them, often with the propeller. These dangerous runaway vessel situations put the ejected operator, other users of the waterway, and marine law enforcement officers and other first responders in serious danger.

Section 503 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 required manufacturers of covered recreational boats (less than 26 feet in length, with an engine capable of 115 lbs. of static thrust) to equip the vessel with an ECOS installed as of December 2019. Owners of recreational vessels produced after December 2019 are required to maintain the ECOS on their vessel in a serviceable condition. It is recommended that recreational vessel owners regularly check their existing ECOS system to ensure it works, following manufacturer’s instructions.

Section 8316 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2021 requires individuals operating covered recreational vessels (less than 26 feet in length, with an engine capable of 115 lbs. of static thrust; 3 HP or more) to use ECOS “links.” Using the ECOSL is required only when the primary helm is not within



*Continued on page 2*

# Things to Know about the COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/need-to-know.html>

**ACT NOW!**



WEAR A MASK



STAY 6 FEET APART



AVOID CROWDS

Updated Mar. 8, 2021

## Important Ways to Slow the Spread

- Wear [a mask that covers your nose and mouth](#) to help protect yourself and others.
- [Stay 6 feet apart from others](#) who don't live with you.
- Get a [COVID-19 vaccine](#) when it is available to you.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
- [Wash your hands often](#) with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available.

## If You are at Risk of Getting Very Sick

- People of any age, even healthy young adults and children, can get COVID-19.
- [People who are older](#) or have [certain underlying medical conditions](#) are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19.
- [Other groups](#) may be at higher risk for getting COVID-19 or having more severe illness.

## Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

- Authorized [COVID-19 vaccines](#) can help protect you from COVID-19.
- You should get a COVID-19 vaccine when it is available to you.
- [Once you are fully vaccinated](#), you may be able to start doing some things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic.

## What to Do If You're Sick

- Stay home except to get medical care.
- Isolate yourself from other members of your family to prevent spread to them and the people that they may have contact with, like grandparents.
- Even if you don't feel sick, you can spread COVID-19 to others.
- Get care immediately if you are having emergency warning signs, like trouble breathing, pain or pressure in chest.

## How to Get a Test for Current Infection

- You can visit your [state](#) or [local](#) health department's website to look for the latest local information on testing.

- If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and [want to get tested](#), call your healthcare provider first.
- If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and choose to not get tested, it is important to stay home. Find out [what to do if you are sick](#).

## What Symptoms to Watch For

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Nausea
- Diarrhea

Other symptoms are [signs of serious illness](#). If someone has trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, or difficulty staying awake, get medical care immediately.

*Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\), Division of Viral Diseases](#)*

*Coast Guard Announces New Law Requiring Use of Engine Cut-off Switches, continued from page 1*

an enclosed cabin, and when the boat is operating on plane or above displacement speed. Common situations where ECOSL use would not be required include docking/trailing, trolling and operating in no-wake zones.

The Coast Guard believes that the overwhelming majority of recreational vessels produced for decades have had an ECOS installed, so this new use requirement simply obli-

gates recreational vessel operators to use critical safety equipment already present on their boat.

Seven states currently have ECOS use laws for traditional recreational vessels, and 44 states have ECOS use laws for personal watercraft (PWC).

Boaters are encouraged to check the U.S. Coast Guard website for additional information on this new use **requirement** and other safety regulations and recommendations.

## OIL ABSORBENT BILGE PADS AVAILABLE

The Virginia Clean Marine Program has oil absorbent bilge pads available for distribution. The bilge pads were purchased with a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund. Please email [askVCMP@vims.edu](mailto:askVCMP@vims.edu), if you would like bilge pads for your slip holders.



# The Essential BoatUS Spring Commissioning Checklist and more ways to ensure a trouble-free boating season

SPRINGFIELD, VA, March 8, 2021 – Boat Owners Association of The United States ([BoatUS](#)) offers its updated Spring Commissioning Checklist to help boaters start the season right. The nation's largest advocacy, service and savings group also offers [BoatUS.com/Spring](#), a new one-stop-shop for everything you need to know about the yearly ritual of recreational boat commissioning. A PDF copy of the checklist is available to download, print, and take to the boat with you. Be sure to follow all manufacturer recommendations for your specific boat, engine and accessories.

## Before You Launch

1. Inspect all around the hose clamps for rust and replace as necessary. Double clamp fuel lines and exhaust hoses with marine-rated stainless steel hose clamps. While not technically required, it's wise to double clamp whenever possible on all hoses – especially those below the waterline.
2. Inspect all hoses for stiffness, rot, leaks and cracking, and replace any that are faulty. Make sure they fit snugly.
3. Inspect prop(s) for dings, pitting and distortion. Make sure cotter pins are secure.
4. Grip the prop (on inboard drive systems) and try moving the shaft up and down and side to side. If it's loose and can be wiggled, the cutless bearing may need to be replaced.
5. Check the rudderstock to ensure it hasn't been bent. Operate the wheel or tiller to ensure the steering works correctly. Check the rudder bearing for unusual play or movement.
6. Inspect the hull for blisters, distortions and stress cracks.

7. Make sure your engine intake sea strainer (if equipped) is not cracked or bent from ice and is free of corrosion, clean and properly secured.
8. With inboards, check the engine shaft and rudder stuffing boxes for correct adjustment. A stuffing box should leak no more than two or three drops each minute when the prop shaft is turning. Check the shaft log hose for deterioration and rusty hose clamps.
9. Inspect, lubricate and exercise seacocks.
10. Use a garden hose to check for deck leaks at ports and hatches. Renew caulk or gaskets as necessary.
11. Inspect and test the bilge pump and float switch to make sure they're both working properly. Also inspect the pump's hose.
12. Check stove and remote LPG tanks for loose fittings, leaking hoses and properly functioning shutoff systems. Use the pressure gauge to conduct a leak down test to check for system leaks.
13. Inspect dock and anchor lines for chafe and wear.
14. If equipped, ensure that the stern drain plug is installed.
15. After the boat is launched, be sure to check all thru-hulls for leaks.

## Engines and Fuel Systems

1. Inspect fuel lines, including fuel tank fill and vent hoses, for softness, brittleness or cracking. Check all joints for leaks, and make sure all lines are well supported with noncombustible clips or straps with smooth edges.



*Is she ready to go for the season? The BoatUS Spring Commissioning checklist can help ensure she will. Photo credit: BoatUS.*

2. Inspect fuel tanks, fuel pumps and filters for leaks. Ensure portable tanks and lines are completely drained of stale fuel before filling with fresh fuel. Clean or replace fuel filters and/or fuel-water separators if not done before winterization.
3. Every few years, remove and inspect exhaust manifolds and risers for corrosion (for inboard-powered and inboard/outboard boats).
4. Charge battery.
5. Clean and tighten electrical connections, especially both ends of battery cables. Use a wire brush to clean battery terminals, and top off cells with distilled water (if applicable).
6. Inspect the bilge ventilation intake and blower ducting for damage or leaks and run the blower to confirm correct operation.
7. Test engine warnings and alarms.

## Engine Outdrives and Outboards

1. Inspect rubber outdrive bellows for cracked, dried and/or deteriorated spots (look especially in the folds) and replace if suspect.

*continued on page 4*

*The Essential BoatUS Spring Commissioning Checklist, continued from page 3*

2. Check power steering and power trim oil levels.
3. [Replace anodes/zincs](#) that are more than half wasted.
4. Inspect the outer jacket of control cables. Cracks or swelling indicate corrosion and mean that the cable must be replaced.
5. [Inspect lower unit oil level and top off as necessary.](#)

### Sailboat Rigging

1. Inspect swage fittings for cracks and heavy rust (some discoloration is acceptable). Inspect wire halyards and running backstays for “fishhooks” and rust.
2. Remove tape on turnbuckles and lubricate threads, preferably with Teflon. Replace old tape with fresh tape, and ensure that water is able to freely drain from it.
3. If you suspect the core around a chainplate is damp, remove the chainplate to inspect and make repairs.

### Trailers

1. Inspect tire treads and sidewalls for cracks or lack of tread and replace as necessary. Check air pressure; don't forget the spare.
2. Inspect wheel bearings and repack as necessary.
3. Test all lights and replace any broken bulbs or lenses.
4. Inspect winch to make sure it's working properly. Inspect hitch chains.
5. Inspect trailer frame and axle(s) for rust. Sand and paint to prevent further deterioration.
6. Inspect brakes and brake fluid reservoir.

### Safety

1. Ensure your engine cut-off switch is working properly, and

the lanyard is in serviceable condition.

2. Check expiration dates on flares.
3. Inspect fire extinguishers. Replace if more than 12 years from the date of manufacture or if age is unknown. More than 40 million Kidde extinguishers with plastic handles [were recalled](#) on Nov. 2, 2017.
4. Ensure you have properly sized and wearable life jackets in good condition for each passenger, including kids. Check inflatable life jacket cylinders and dissolvable “pill” bobbins in auto-inflating models.
5. Test smoke, carbon monoxide, fume and bilge alarms.
6. Check running lights for operation and spare bulb inventory.
7. [Update paper charts and chart-plotter software.](#)
8. Replenish first-aid kit items that may have been used last season or are expired.
9. Check the operation of VHF radio(s) and that the MMSI number is correctly programmed in. ([BoatUS members can obtain a free MMSI number at BoatUS.com/MMSI.](#))
10. Get a free vessel safety check from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or U.S. Power Squadrons. Find out more at [cgaux.org/vsc](#).
11. With Covid still around, it's a good idea to keep sanitizer and spare masks aboard. And don't forget to follow social distancing guidelines in the yard or marina while prepping.

### For the Dock

1. In addition to checking its entire length for wear or abrasions, check both ends of the shore power cable connections, as well as the shore power receptacle on the boat, for burns, which indicate the cable and/

or boat's shore power inlet or the dock's receptacle must be replaced.

2. Test ground-fault protection on your boat and private dock, and know how to prevent Electric Shock Drowning.

### The Paperwork

1. Make sure your boat registration is up to date. Don't forget your boat trailer tags.
2. Review your boat insurance policy and update coverage if needed. BoatUS provides [free quotes at BoatUS.com/Insurance](#). Provide a copy to your marina or club.
3. Ensure your BoatUS membership is in good standing, and check your [TowBoatUS](#) coverage by logging into [BoatUS.com/Account](#), or join at [BoatUS.com/Membership](#).
4. Download the free BoatUS App ([BoatUS.com/App](#)) to make it easy to summon on-water assistance and speed response times as well to check tide tables, weather, and partner discounts.

### About Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS):

Celebrating more than 50 years, BoatUS is the nation's largest organization of recreational boaters with more than 700,000 members. We are the boat owners' voice on Capitol Hill and fight for their rights. We are The Boat Owners Auto Club and help ensure a roadside trailer breakdown doesn't end a boating or fishing trip before it begins. When boats break down on the water, TowBoatUS brings them safely back to the launch ramp or dock, 24/7. BoatUS offers GEICO Marine Insurance policies that give boat owners affordable, specialized coverage and superior service they need. We help keep boaters safe and our waters clean with assistance from the nonprofit BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water. Visit [BoatUS.com](#).

# An Angler's Winter Chore Could Help Spark an Idea that Increases Fishing Line Recycling

## \$30,000 in cash prizes on the line for best solutions

SPRINGFIELD, VA, February 2, 2021 - Winter is annual maintenance time for many anglers, and reeling with new line and recycling the old is a common task. Ever thought about what happens once you dispose of the old line in a fishing line recycling tube?

It's not pretty. Turning fishing line into new products is labor-intensive, requiring a series of workers to manually comb through, sort, clean, remove hooks and weights, and separate out miles of encrusted debris in entangled fishing line. So as you pile up a few reels of line to be recycled this winter, the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is asking for your ideas on how to help grow the volume of line recycled each year.

Teaming up with fishing tackle company Berkley, the BoatUS Foundation's [Recast & Recycle Contest](#) seeks out new ideas and improvements to the process, new ideas for recycled products, or technology breakthroughs for the current process that will increase the volume of line and soft baits that are recycled. Entry is simple – all you have to do is send a short video or one-page summary explaining your idea. Thirty thousand dollars in prize money is at stake for the three best ideas submitted through May 14, 2021.

"It's great that anglers recycle," said BoatUS Foundation Director of Outreach Alanna Keating. "Now we need to ask for help with scaling up recycling with a greater volume of line, whether it's a time- and labor-saving process improvement or



*Do you have any better ideas on how to recycle soft baits and old fishing line? There's \$30,000 in cash prizes at stake in the Recast and Recycle contest.*

creating a new market to fully sustain recycling efforts."

Judges will add weight to contest submissions that actually work, are practical, innovative, and have the potential to have a significant impact.

The first-place prize is \$15,000, second place receives \$10,000, and \$5,000 will be awarded for third place. Contest submissions can address any part of the process (or multiple parts) of taking discarded fishing line and soft plastics from end of life to a new beginning. Professionals, amateurs and students alike

are encouraged to apply, as are school teams and groups. Contest entries can be submitted with as little as a link to a video demonstration of the idea or a one-page graphic summary. Videos are limited to 4 minutes.

Contest rules and conditions, details on the current recycling process and videos on how various plastics and soft baits are recycled can be found at the Recast & Recycle website [BoatUS.org/Contest](#).

### **About the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water:**

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is a national leader promoting safe, clean and responsible boating. Funded primarily by donations from the more than 700,000 members of Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS), the nonprofit provides innovative educational outreach directly to boaters and anglers with the aim of reducing accidents and fatalities, increasing stewardship of America's waterways and keeping boating safe for all. A range of boating safety courses – including 36 free state courses – can be found at [BoatUS.org/Courses](#).

### **About Pure Fishing:**

Pure Fishing, Inc. is a leading global provider of fishing tackle, lures, rods and reels with a portfolio of brands that includes Abu Garcia, All Star, Berkley, Fenwick, Fin-Nor, Greys, Hardy, Hodgman, Johnson, JRC, Mitchell, Penn, Pflueger, Sebile, Shakespeare®, SpiderWire, Stren, Ugly Stik, and Van Staal.

