



BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

A PROCLAMATION

GEORGIA SAFE BOATING WEEK

- WHEREAS:** The State of Georgia is blessed with many beautiful and accessible coastal waters, freshwater rivers, and lakes, many of which offer the freedom and ability for Georgians to use for personal recreation and enjoyment, benefitting the state economy and greatly enhancing the quality of life for Georgia residents and visitors; and
- WHEREAS:** According to the U.S. Coast Guard's 2024 Recreational Boating Statistics, the most recent year for which complete data are available, there were 556 recreational boating fatalities nationwide, the fewest in more than 50 years, yet paddlecraft (kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddleboards) still accounted for 26% of all deaths, and motorized personal watercraft or "jet skis" were involved in 19% of reported incidents; and
- WHEREAS:** Drowning claimed most victims, with 87% of those who drowned not wearing a life jacket. Most of these preventable tragedies are caused by human error or poor judgment and not by boat or paddlecraft, equipment or environmental factors; and
- WHEREAS:** By law, boaters are required to have a U.S. Coast Guard-approved wearable life jacket on board and available for each person on the boat, and boaters are encouraged to wear a life jacket at all times while boating; and
- WHEREAS:** The growing popularity of recreational boating, paddle sports, and related water sports has increased the responsibilities of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Coast Guard, as well as volunteer organizations such as the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, the U.S. Power Squadrons – America's Boating Club, the Georgia Chapter of the American Canoe Association, and Georgia Rivers who strive to ensure the safety of the boating public; and
- WHEREAS:** During Georgia Safe Boating Week and throughout the year, dedicated enforcement officers, as well as volunteer organizations, provide Georgia citizens with the knowledge and skills to become safer and more responsible boaters; and
- WHEREAS:** Georgians are encouraged to spread the message of boating safety, urging fellow boaters to participate in boating education classes (situational awareness and rules of the road), check the weather, file a float plan, stay sober, wear life jackets, and follow State and Coast Guard regulations. Boating safety knowledge and skills are important in reducing human error, improving judgment, and ultimately saving lives; now
- THEREFORE:** I, BRIAN P. KEMP, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim May 16-22, 2026, as GEORGIA SAFE BOATING WEEK in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 4th day of May in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty-Six.



B. Kemp

GOVERNOR

ATTEST

Lauren M. Curry

CHIEF OF STAFF