



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

*The Lifeguarding Experts*

### **Be Safe ...Think Ahead**

Boating is something many of us look forward to all winter. We can't wait to get out in the water. Our goal is to have a great time and to ensure that we come home safely. Sadly, many people do not. Of the 500 people who drown every year about 1/3 or 140 are boaters. In many cases, they went out thinking they were going to have a great day but then the unexpected happened. In order to ensure that you have a safe trip, think ahead, and make sure you're prepared. Here are a few things to put on your check list:

#### **Ensure that you have the following items in your boat; it's now the law:**

- a) One approved lifejacket or one approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) for each person on board. Flotation devices must now be the appropriate size for each person on board.
- b) One manual-propelling device or one anchor with at least 15 metres of rope or chain (approx. 50 feet). This replaces the requirement to carry two oars or two paddles.
- c) One bailer or one manual pump with sufficient hose to pump water from the bilge over the side of the vessel.
- d) Navigation lights must meet applicable standards if the pleasure craft is to be operated after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility.
- e) A sound signaling device (can be a pealess whistle) or a sound signaling appliance.
- f) One Class 5BC fire extinguisher if the vessel is equipped with a fuel-burning cooking, heating, refrigerating appliance or a fixed fuel tank of any size. The fire extinguisher must now be rated for both "B" (combustible liquids) and "C" (electrical) fires.

**g)** A buoyant heaving line that is at least 15 m long (approx. 50 ft).

Be aware of weather changes and the risks associated with cold water. Make sure you inform someone of your destination and expected time of return. Make sure you drive powerboats responsibly. Look before you act, stay low, drive at moderate speeds, and use proper lights after dark.

Be safe. Think Ahead and make every trip a round trip. For more information, go to [www.lifesaving.ca](http://www.lifesaving.ca).

**364 words**