

# Massachusetts Environmental Police remind residents to wear their life jackets as weather improves

On Sunday, April 5, 2020, two individuals kayaking on the Ipswich River overturned their vessels. The kayakers were not wearing lifejackets, nor were any personal floatation devices aboard. The water levels are high and the current was fast; fortunately, the individuals were able to grab onto floating debris to avoid drowning. Both kayakers suffered hypothermia and a local police officer was seriously injured during the rescue effort.

The leading cause of death in boating accidents is drowning and in nearly 85% of drowning cases the victim was not wearing a lifejacket. The Massachusetts Environmental Police remind paddle-craft users that all persons onboard are required to wear a personal floatation device from September 15 through May 15. Furthermore, all vessels must have age and size appropriate PFDs readily accessible for all persons aboard year-round.

For information on how to choose the right life jacket, visit: [https://uscgboating.org/images/howtochoosetherightlifejacket\\_brochure.pdf](https://uscgboating.org/images/howtochoosetherightlifejacket_brochure.pdf).

# LIFE JACKETS SAVE LIVES

Wearing a life jacket **INCREASES THE CHANCE OF SURVIVAL** from capsizing or falling overboard.



**80%** of all fatal boating accident victims drowned.

Of these, **83%** were not wearing a life jacket.

Select the **RIGHT LIFE JACKET STYLE** for the boating activity.

- Read the label for U.S. Coast Guard approval.
- Ensure snug fit and fasten all buckles and zippers.
- Select it for comfort.

*Remember, specific styles available for watersports, hunting, angling, paddling and more!*



Accidents happen fast.

**DO NOT STORE** a life jacket while underway.

Always **WEAR A LIFE JACKET** while boating.

Knowing how to swim **DOES NOT** protect someone from drowning.

Inflatable life jackets are only for those 16 years and older, and not intended for weak or non-swimmers.



Source: 2016 Recreational Boating Statistics, U.S. Coast Guard.

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