



National Safe Boating Council

"Safer Boating Through Education, Outreach and Training"

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April 5, 2012

Jo Calkin

U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters G-OPB
2100 Second Street, SW
Washington D. C. 20593-0001

Dear Ms. Calkin:

For the Year 2011 the United States Coast Guard has granted the National Safe Boating Council \$19,999.00 to administer the Promoting Life Jacket Wear Point of Sale Marketing with Retailers at the USACE California Project Grant, Agreement No. 1102.03. This letter, together with the enclosed report, forms and budget, is our official final report.

Sincerely,

Virgil H. Chambers
Executive Director
National Safe Boating Council

Enclosures: Report, Standard Forms 272, and 425, 2011 Life Jacket Wear POS Budget

National Safe Boating Council
Promoting Life Jacket Wear by Point of Sale “Marketing” with Retailers at the USACE
California Project
Grant 1102.03
Completion Report

Abstract:

The National Safe Boating Council explored the feasibility of a new approach to public awareness on life jacket wear that would create a willingness to wear a life jacket, adopt a safety culture by taking the mystery out of purchasing the right life jacket and change the public behavior of resisting this simple life saving concept. This grant project was very successful, although not in the way we had originally anticipated. The ultimate success came from deliverable items created for the grant that will have a lasting impact and reach far beyond the timeframe of the grant itself. For example, the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) created a Point-of-Sale Pull-Up Banner that was utilized at multiple locations. This banner included a new web site address (www.LifeJacketChoice.com) that essentially sent everyone to the “Wear It!” campaign web site to learn more about different life jacket options that are available and which life jackets are most appropriate for specific activities. The banner also included a QR code that provides people with smartphones to immediately access the information on their smartphones. There were some lessons learned about the methodology and some factors beyond our control such as timing of the project, flooded lakes at the test site, and life jacket product availability at the big box stores. The final grant product that was produced exceeded our expectations and was eagerly received and accepted.

In conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Mandatory Life Jacket Wear Study in central California, this grant contacted two marinas, two major retailers, and three small retailers at area test and control lakes to determine the public’s reaction to the actual purchasing of life jackets.

The proposal developed point of sale (POS) education packages for the retailer to display which educated and encouraged people to purchase life jackets that are comfortable to wear. By educating the public this increases their acceptance of the mandatory wear requirement.

The Point of Sale education packages included a Point of Sale pull up banner using the “matrix for “if” “then” for choosing a life jacket, a “Checklist for Choosing a Life Jacket”, a 3 page description of the key words describing how to choose a life jacket, as well as a web address to access this information. The 80 inch by 24 inch pull up banner answered many life jacket questions. A QR code was displayed on the banner which linked the customer to a checklist on “How to Choose a Life Jacket.” This document is posted to a new webpage www.lifejacketchoice.com and to the “Wear It!” campaign page. The pull up banner has become the resounding success of this project. The banner was introduced nationally at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit in San Diego, California.

This project has generated interest in continuing the “Life Jacket Point of Sale” concept with the Personal Floatation Device Manufacturers Association, several life jacket manufacturers, a major national retail chain and the Association of Marina Industries. Other potential partners include the Marine Retailers Association of America and National Marine Manufacturers Association.

**National Safe Boating Council
Promoting Life Jacket Wear by Point of Sale “Marketing” with
Retailers at the USACE California Project
FY 2011 U.S. Coast Guard Non-Profit Grant Program
Completion Report**

*US Coast Guard Fast Track Grant 1102.03
From the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC)*

PROJECT NARRATIVE

PROJECT GOAL

The goal of the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) grant proposal was to support the United States Coast Guard (USCG) by increasing the actual life jacket wear rate by promoting, marketing and public awareness on the availability of inflatable life jackets via nontraditional venues. This would focus on Objective 4: Life Jacket Wear, of the National Recreational Boating Safety Strategic Plan. Most of the strategies for this objective have been worked on to some degree, but no campaign targeting manufacturers, retailers and point of sale has been pursued.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Mandatory Life Jacket Wear Study in central California, this grant contacted one marina, two major retailers, and three small retailers at area test and control lakes to determine the public’s reaction to the actual purchasing of life jackets.

The proposal developed point of sale (POS) education packages for the retailer to display that would encourage people to purchase life jackets that are comfortable to wear, thereby increasing the public’s acceptance of the mandatory wear requirement.

The grant tried to determine what last year’s sales were relative to types of life jackets and quantities sold but information was not provided. The NSBC was unable to determine what types were sold or conduct a survey of why people bought the life jacket they did, if they were satisfied with the “wearability” and what other factors they liked or disliked about life jackets they purchased. The majority of life jackets had been purchased before the grant was able to launch. A heavy emphasis was directed towards inflatable life jackets.

A key factor working with life jacket manufacturers to ensure some kind of incentive for the retailers to have sufficient product availability throughout the study period so that this didn’t become a deterrent or discourage boating was also past the inauguration of the mandatory wear requirement. The marinas both likely would have participated.

BACKGROUND and NEEDS ASSESSMENT

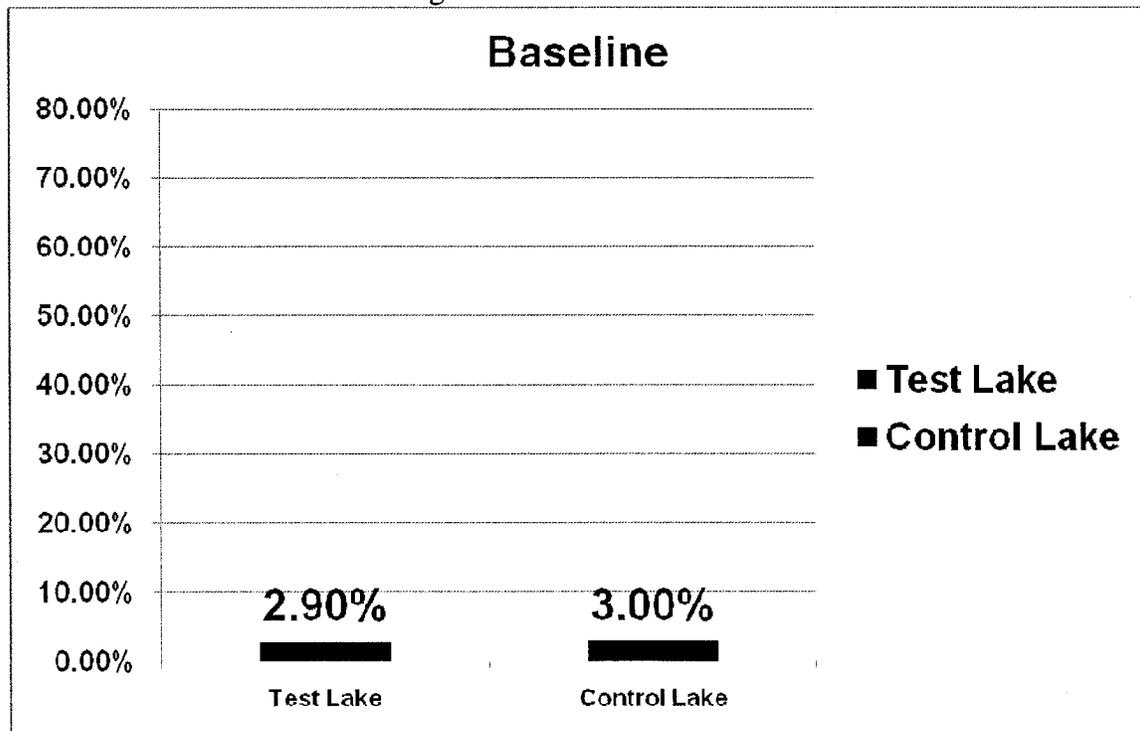
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Mandatory Life Jacket Wear Study proposes that “there are no data available which demonstrate that a life jacket mandate would have a negative impact on recreational boaters. There is fear and speculation amongst boaters which should be mitigated by an informed public education and outreach effort, based on real data.” The USACE believes that the greatest risk groups are boaters in small craft (under 16’ motorized and all paddle craft), and boaters under main propulsion in boats 16’-26’. Additionally, the USACE advocates advance coordination and continued effort as being critical with education an important part that will lead to success.

The USACE has conducted studies in Mississippi and Pennsylvania. For the year 2011, they will be conducting another study in California at a USACE lake managed out of the Sacramento office, Pine Flat Lake. The study control lake will be a California State Park property called Millerton Lake.

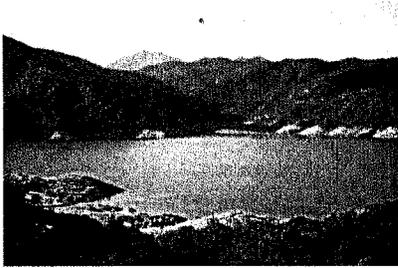
The Pine Flat Lake Study will require life jacket wear at all times on non-motorized boats regardless of size, at all times on boats less than 16 feet, when under main propulsion (with exception) on boats 16 to 26 feet, and the same for boats greater than 26 feet.

JSI conducted baseline observation wear rate studies in 2010 at both the study lake and the control lake with the following results:



The Study Lake

Pine Flat Lake is a USACE recreation area 35 miles east of Fresno and less than an hour in the Sierra and Sequoia National Forests. The scenic and rugged Kings River Canyon is the location of this beautiful park where fishing, boating, and waterskiing are all available. Pine Flat Lake provides recreation opportunities for hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. Pine Flat Dam is an impressive structure which impounds the waters of the Kings River. Construction of the 429-foot tall dam was completed in 1954. Today, Pine Flat continues to provide flood control and irrigation benefits to the San Joaquin Valley. A hydroelectric plant was completed in 1984. At maximum capacity, the lake holds 1,000,000 acre feet of water. Pine Flat Lake has about 208,827 persons boating out of 5 ramps, 3 marinas and a total of 267 marina slips.



There is a commercial marina on the lake, located at the Deer Creek recreation area. It offers boat and slip rentals, gasoline, camping, and fishing supplies. Boat launching ramps are available at the Deer Creek, Island Park, Lakeview and Trimmer recreation areas. Boaters are reminded that water surface levels fluctuate daily. Six overnight mooring areas are located around the lake.

All areas are patrolled by USACE rangers and deputies of the Fresno County Sheriff's Department.

Press release dated August 31, 2010 - Pine Flat Lake to require life jacket wear for 2011 recreation season, SACRAMENTO, California

From April 1, 2011 until October 31, 2011, Pine Flat Lake will require life jacket wear for most boaters and some swimmers as part of a multi-year U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study of its agency-wide life jacket policy. This study will inform a decision by Corps headquarters of whether to change its recreation policy to require life jacket wear.

While the Corps' water safety education and outreach efforts have reduced the annual fatality rate at its parks from a high of 500 in the 1970s to its current rate of approximately 150, continued efforts have not succeeded in further reducing that rate. Statistics kept from 1989 to present show that more than 92 percent of drowning victims on Corps waters were not wearing a life jacket.

"This study is about saving lives," Pine Flat Lake Park Manager Tom Ehrke said. "Visitor safety is our top priority, and we're proud to be taking part in this study to help make our parks even safer."

Pine Flat Lake is the Corps' third test region for the study, and adds perspective on policy enforcement in California and the West. Corps lakes in the Northeast and the Southeast are also participating in the study.

As part of the Pine Flat study, the U.S. Coast Guard conducted life jacket wear-rate observations under Pine Flat's existing life jacket policy in July and August 2010, and performed similar observations at Millerton Lake for study comparison. Wear rates will also be observed at both lakes during the policy enforcement period, although the policy will apply only on Pine Flat Lake. Findings from the California study will be included in the larger study by Corps headquarters, where a decision about a permanent life jacket policy change will be made based on study results and feedback from partner agencies and the public.

When Pine Flat implements the new life jacket policy in April 2011, life jacket wear (U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets) will be required for:

1. Everyone swimming more than 100 feet away from the shoreline.
2. Everyone aboard all non-motorized vessels, regardless of length, at all times.
3. Everyone aboard motorized vessels up to 16-feet in length, at all times.
4. Everyone aboard motorized vessels 16-feet in length or larger when the vessel is underway (under main propulsion). Passengers in fully-enclosed cabins (in houseboats, for example), are not required to wear a life jacket. Life jackets are required for pilots or passengers in any exposed area of the vessel when the vessel is underway (under main propulsion). Life jackets are not required when the vessel is stationary, or powered by a trolling motor.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the nation's largest provider of recreation on federal public lands.

The Control Lake

With over 40 miles of shore land for water sports, this California State Recreation Area offers visitors swimming, fishing, and boating. The hills surrounding the lake provide good hiking opportunities. The lake was created by construction of the Friant Dam across the San Joaquin River in 1944. The park's camping facilities include boat camping. The park contains the original Millerton County Courthouse, built in 1867.

Millerton Lake is 20 miles northeast of Fresno via Highway 41 and Highway 145, and is nestled in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Millerton Lake Marina is located in Winchell Cove at Millerton Lake State Recreational Area. It is the only marina on Millerton Lake and is open year round. The Winchell Cove area is operated by a concessionaire for the State Park System.

Millerton Lake Marina offers a variety of slips. The marina currently has 330 wet slips and 55 dry slips which can accommodate boats up to 32 feet.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The Personal Flotation Device Manufacturers Association (PFDMA) members are doing a great job with products that people are willing to wear. However, there is a gap because point of sale information is missing so retailers could become a significant partner in sales which would ultimately get the inflatable life jackets purchased and

worn. There is a need for greater product awareness; the manufacturers believe it is the job of the retailers, the safety advocates believe it is the job of either the manufacturers or the retailers and they should be doing more. In reality, it is more than just educating retailers; it is about creating a relationship with the industry and manufacturers as well as addressing Objective 4: Life Jacket Wear of the Strategic Plan. Neither the manufacturers, the retailers nor the safety advocates have been working together to ensure point of sale awareness; consequently resulting in poor awareness and sales, therefore resulting in low sales and static fatality and wear rates.

The reason we did a little broader scope of “marketing life jacket wear” is to ensure persons understand the nuances of the law that does not allow inflatables on personal water craft (PWC) or child wear.

The observable goal of the “Promoting Life Jacket Wear by Point of Sale ‘Marketing’ with Retailers” was to create a stronger, more concrete relationship between boating safety educators and the commercial side of recreational boating. At this time, there is an indirect disconnect between the industry side of boating and the boating safety education community. While boating safety educators continue to push the effectiveness and importance of life jackets, specifically inflatable life jackets, there is a communication barrier between these individuals, manufacturers and retailers. Many retailers that may carry inflatable life jackets are unaware or unsure of how these products work.

At this time, very few people have even heard of the inflatable life jackets and those that have heard of them often do not know how to use them. Furthermore, at this point in time, it can be difficult for a recreational boater to go to a retail store to purchase an inflatable life jacket. Inventories are low at the retail level because retailers are hesitant to stock a product that they are not familiar with. Rearming kits may not even be available. Because the demand for this product is still so low, it’s difficult to get more individuals into inflatable life jackets.

This goal directly supports the mission and goals of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program by improving the necessary relationship with retailers, manufacturers, and the industry that will ultimately reach the tipping point that leads to a more demonstrated knowledge and changed behavior of boaters demanding this product. Retailers who do not learn may lose business when retailers who “discover” the product gain the customer. Those customers are the boating safety advocates “customer” which ultimately will lead to lives saved.

The objective of this proposal was to work on a direct level with boating retailers, manufacturers and the boating industry to ensure that all related parties have an in-depth and comprehensive knowledge of inflatable life jackets. This, in turn, will allow all parties to continue to promote the same, unified message. By creating a strong bond with this unique group, a substantial service will be extended to the entire recreational boating community. By addressing concerns related to life jackets, specifically inflatable life jackets, all interested parties are working together to negate these concerns, resulting in an ultimate increase of life jacket wear by boaters.

The grant addressed how this project will ultimately reach boaters through the combined efforts of the boating safety education community, the retailers, manufacturers, and the industry to instruct and educate on inflatable life jackets, creating a very specific and necessary purpose in today's boating community.

This project should serve as a pilot for a bigger grant the NSBC has submitted for the 2012 non profit grant cycle and use lessons learned to be able to move more efficiently if that grant gets approved.

METHODOLOGY

Marketing Approach

In conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mandatory Life Jacket Wear Study in central California, we contacted one marina, two major retailers and three small retailers at the area test and control lakes to determine the public's reaction to the actual purchasing of life jackets.

The proposal developed point of sale (POS) education packages for the retailer to display that would encourage people to purchase life jackets that are comfortable to wear, thereby increasing the public's acceptance of the mandatory wear requirement.

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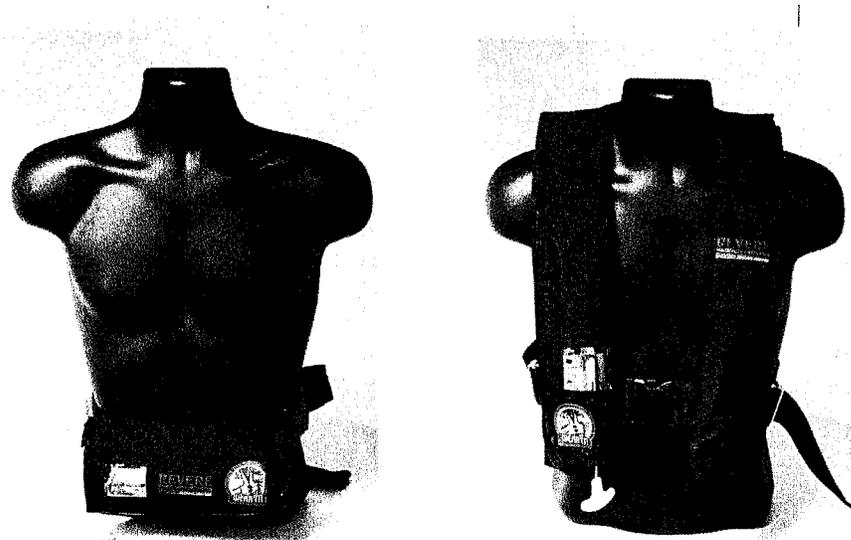
I. Outreach and Education

- A. Meet with Retail Managers and Associates
- B. Train Associates on Inflatable Life Jackets
 - 1. Based on Layout of Store
 - 2. Based on Inventory of Life Jacket Sold
- C. Knowledge of Product is Critical
- D. Sufficient inventory
- E. FAQ,s addressed

II. Display/Kit Component

- A. Display Easel
 - 1. Identify "Trainer" and Inflatable Life Jackets

- 2. Visual Component
 - a. Un-inflated Life Jacket
 - b. Inflated Life Jacket
- B. Inflatable Life Jacket Options Available-Display mannequins
 - 1. “Basic” Model – Manual or Automatic – differences, proper activities
 - 2. Suspender-style vs. Belt Pack-style
 - 3. “Pro” Labeling
- C. Accessories
 - 1. Re-Arming Kits
 - 2. Location of accessories in relation to life jackets



Mannequins, 3 per store, third would be “wearing” one inflated.

Basic Initiative Components

The most basic function of this initiative was getting to the source of the lack of knowledge and understanding of the inflatable style of life jackets. By educating, demonstrating, and creating awareness to the very first group – the retailers – the initiative sought to have the desired effect trickle down to more boaters. The components will continue to intersect and complement each other and numerous points throughout the timeline to create a unified initiative. For simplicity, however, the components are presented here as discrete functions with separate executions. These components build upon the design analysis and marketing strategy for this initiative.

Inflatable Life Jacket Marketing

In order to properly “market” inflatable life jackets, it is important to know what questions the consumer is asking and then use those questions to educate the consumer on the reason they should be purchasing this product over other available products at the point of sale.

At a national retailer, which hosted a May 2010 “Wear It!” campaign event for inflating life jackets, NSBC staff set up a display and answered questions from the public over three days. By answering the public’s questions, sales of the inflatable life jacket and the rearming kits were higher than the store’s inventory and anticipated sales that week.

What were the frequently asked questions?

- *How can such a small life jacket float me?* This is where the static display of an uninflated life jacket and a fully inflated life jacket really “makes the sale”.
- *How much flotation is there; how does only 22 pounds float me?* This is where a type III inherently buoyant life jacket that says 15 pounds inflation also “makes the sale” by explaining this model will float you higher and has more flotation than the life jackets they are used to.
- *Are different sizes available?* This is where you explain that these are a universal size but are not approved for persons younger than 16 years old. It’s important to also take the time to mention they are not approved for action sports like PWC or water skiing.
- *It rides high; shouldn’t it be around the waist?* This is where you explain you want the flotation high so your head, not your gut, is floating.
- *Are they USCG approved?* This is where it gets tricky; you also need to know the product in inventory. You need to explain how to find out by reading the label, whether it is a type V requiring it to be worn to count for carriage versus the ones that are labeled as type III’s and what all this means. If a person seems hesitant, know of another style that might be available to allay any concerns.
- *How does it inflate?* This is where knowledge of the different inflation systems and options for the product is critical. You would show the manual inflation mechanism: open it up and show the cartridge and the lanyard and explain pulling it punctures the cylinder which then causes the inflation. You would explain the down side to this version if you fell overboard unconscious. You would explain the upside to kayakers and float tube fishermen so they wouldn’t end up continually inflating and rearming an auto inflator one. You would explain the auto inflation mechanism: open up the jacket and discuss how it takes water pushing up into the chamber to cause it to inflate, that fishing in a rain storm or taking water over the bow would not be enough to automatically inflate it, You would then unscrew the inflator and show how the green changes to red and show them the bobbin. You would then, on certain models, show how an auto could be converted to a manual in case you were a kayaker that then wanted to go on a bigger boat cruise.
- *Is there a cylinder included?* Open the life jacket and show it, some are stored separate and need to be “armed”.
- *How long do the cylinders last?* You show them what a discharged cylinder looks like and tell them that as long as it wasn’t punctured it would last many years without worry.
- *How long does it take to inflate?* This is a perfect opening to volunteer them to try it on and see for themselves, camera ready, friends standing close.

- *Should I buy a rearm kit now?* You would explain the rationale of having one available in case they needed it. This is an opportune time to discuss how to check them orally every year.
- *How do you deflate it?* Here you just show them how the oral inflator works to increase or decrease, including comfort levels. For those who inflated life jackets the single most common complaint was how tight it was around the neck so a little reassurance here is very useful, especially noting you wanted it tight in an emergency so it wouldn't pop off.
- *What is the difference between this \$69 life jacket and the \$149 one?* Besides the obvious, answer, \$80, the knowledge of the product is important, usually higher priced models include neck comfort lining but one of the biggest sellers is the 2" straps.
- *Are these small plane approved?* There were two separate individuals who were small plane pilots that frequently flew over Lake Tahoe and thought this might be useful in case they had to ditch in the lake. Discuss the merits about how to wear it over their other gear, a belt pack versus a jacket type and whether the auto or the manual would be better. No recommendation since we didn't know enough about it but both decided a jacket manual type would best fit their needs. Neither one bought a life jacket.
- *One very large person wanted to know about belt extensions.* Mustang Survival's Belt Extension: <http://www.mustangsurvival.com/products/product.php?id=535>

Rearming kit inventories also are not well displayed or stocked. Hanging next to each inflatable model should be the proper rearming kit so that customers can buy a life jacket and the correct rearming kit for future needs. If these are displayed correctly and identified, you should be able to increase the sales. It might also be advantageous to have a sale where the life jacket and its companion rearming kit are sold as a packaged unit. A guide to the product and the proper rearm kit would be beneficial to the customer.

MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS AND BENEFITS

The NSBC was not able to partner with personal flotation device (PFD) and life jacket manufacturers of inflatable life jackets, manufacturers of inflatable life jacket rearming kits and certain national retailers of inflatable life jackets to create better point of sale awareness to the consumer. If the consumer's questions or concerns about these products are answered at the point of sale, it could have increased purchases, a potentially missed plus for the retailer and the manufacturer, and a plus for the USCG incentive to "sell" the concept of wearing a comfortable life jacket.

The manufacturers that indicated an interest in supporting this initiative by providing assistance, retailer incentives to ensure product availability, graphic design and printing or matching funds, thus, force multiplying the return on investment for both the manufacturers and the U.S. Coast Guard in marketing the availability of this life saving product were not solicited due to the late acceptance of the grant.

The grant used funding assistance for the Professional Staff. The NSBC designate a single point of contact to serve as the Professional Staff for this grant. NSBC Deputy

Director Fred Messmann was the point of contact based on his qualifications and insights relating to this initiative. Fred served as the point of contact for issues relating to the initiative and as liaison to the U.S. Coast Guard's designated Grant Technical Manager. The Professional Staff insured that all specified grant products and plans were submitted to the U.S. Coast Guard for review in a timely manner and assured that project timeline and milestones were adhered to within the scope of the grant agreement. The Professional Staff insured that all parties involved in the specified tasks were promptly informed of emerging issues that may affect performance on the tasks, either positive or negative.

BENEFITS AND CONCLUSION

The grant described above represented a comprehensive approach to point of sale marketing of inflatable life jackets. The intended partnerships represented an exciting, long-term opportunity for boating safety and a valuable investment for the U.S. Coast Guard. Extensive volunteer support, instructor support, and direct interface add to a potentially effective boating safety awareness program. All partners, volunteers, and organizations work together to create an effective and informative program that reaches out to novice as well as experienced boaters to educate about wearing a life jacket. In the short-term and in the long-run, this resource may still help to prevent boating fatalities due to not wearing a life jacket.

EVALUATION and MEASUREABLE RESULTS

This grant tried to determine what the life jacket retail sales were in 2010 at two marinas, two large retail stores and four small local retail stores. The retailers themselves did not provide the information. The grant did produce marketing and display point of sale material for the test and control lakes, two marinas, two large retailers and two small retailers. This gave us an idea of the effects of mandatory wear requirements coupled with point of sale education and the same material at a lake without mandatory wear but also point of sale benefits. This information was used to build a larger initiative with most of the lessons learned here.

Promoting Life Jacket Wear by Point of Sale "Marketing" Fast Track Grant COMPLETION REPORT 1102.03

On April 21, 2011, I received word from the USCG approving a fast track grant proposal for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California. I had hoped to begin this in March and have it in place by the effective date of the Corps study April 1. Expenses incurred from April 5, 2011 were allowed under the award. With the approval for this grant coming after the effective date of the implementation of the mandatory wear requirement some adjustments in the overall project were required and the Coast Guard grant manager worked with us to modify the grant.

Development of the necessary marketing aids was completed in May and submitted to the USCG for review, edits and approval. Due to the urgency of getting this done while the

study is actually being conducted I purchased the necessary “model forms”, the inflatable life jackets and ordered the signs to be used from the Wear It campaign and USBI (“Which Life Jacket for You”). I missed my next deadline, Memorial Day, for placing aids, waiting on approvals and production of the pull up banners using the “matrix for “if” “then” for choosing a life jacket and a QR code to link to the “Checklist for Choosing a Life Jacket” as well as a web home for the checklist.

In June, an 80 inch by 2 foot wide pull up banner was produced to answer many of the project questions coupled with a QR code that will link the customer with a “Checklist for choosing a lifejacket at a glance that was also coupled with a 3 page description of the key words describing how to choose a life jacket. This will also be posted to a new webpage www.lifejacketchoice.com and to the “Wear It!” campaign page.

At the end of June, but before the banners were shipped to my office, one banner was shipped to Florida to be displayed at the PFDMA conference in St. Petersburg. We made a presentation, displayed and discussed the new pull up Point of Sale banner, and requested they form a committee to discuss initiatives and learn from lessons being learned on the Pine Flat Lake POS project. There is interest in doing this, perhaps through the Life Jacket Tiger Team. Larry Meddock coined POS, not as Point of Sale, but as Point of **Safe**. Again, information sharing and collaboration with our partners are producing some support for new innovations on how to market and conduct point of sale merchandising for life jackets. It is also valuable to attend their meetings and learn about issues within industry which shows the complexity of the recreational boating safety program overall.

Finally everything came together and we rushed off to Fresno to get this in the marina and local stores before the July 4th holiday. Pine Flat Lake has some issues, primarily being the heavy snow pack and subsequent run off from the Kings River. The ACOE ranger was very helpful and provided numerous contacts and advice on the POS project.

The marinas at both Pine Flat Lake and Millerton Lake (the control lake) were experiencing flooded parking lots and beaches. The Pine Flat Marina was supportive of the point of sale material and would have ordered more product earlier in the year with support from the manufactures but the logistics at this stage proved to be a barrier. The marina has purchased the inflatable belt pack for their staff and requires they be worn. They also sell a limited amount of Stearns and Mustang life jackets at the store, advising that their customers usually purchase life jackets in town. The marina is not happy with the mandate but support the study in general and are complying with rather than opposing the study with a wait and see attitude.

There are a couple of small stores nearby, primarily selling “beverages”, ice and bait but not life jackets. One of the stores had a couple of type II’s that may have belonged to Noah. The next closest retail stores were in Clovis, a suburb of Fresno. The marina manager at Millerton said he doesn’t sell life jackets but might have considered it earlier in the year had the manufacturers help been available. At this time he sends all his customers to Target, a little over 10 miles away.

I then visited the Target store. They had only a few infant and small child life jackets and absolutely not one one adult life jacket in stock. I spoke with the department and the store manager who advised that early in the year they sold out and that corporate wouldn't allow them to order more inventory even though they know they could sell it.

The West Marine store was a different story. The manager there had a display with a sale price for inflatable life jackets and informed me sales were up over 300%.

The only stores that I was able to place a pull up banner with reasonable confidence it would support a point of sale was at the Pine Flat Lake Marina and the Clovis West Marine.

LESSONS LEARNED

The NSBC wanted to explore the feasibility of a new approach to public awareness and willingness to wear a life jacket that the public would really want to wear one, adopt a safety culture through taking the mystery out of purchasing the right life jacket and change their behavior of resisting this simple life saving concept. This grant project was a success although not in the way we anticipated success. There were some lessons learned about the methodology and some factors that were beyond our control. However, the final product that was produced exceeded our expectations and was eagerly received and accepted.

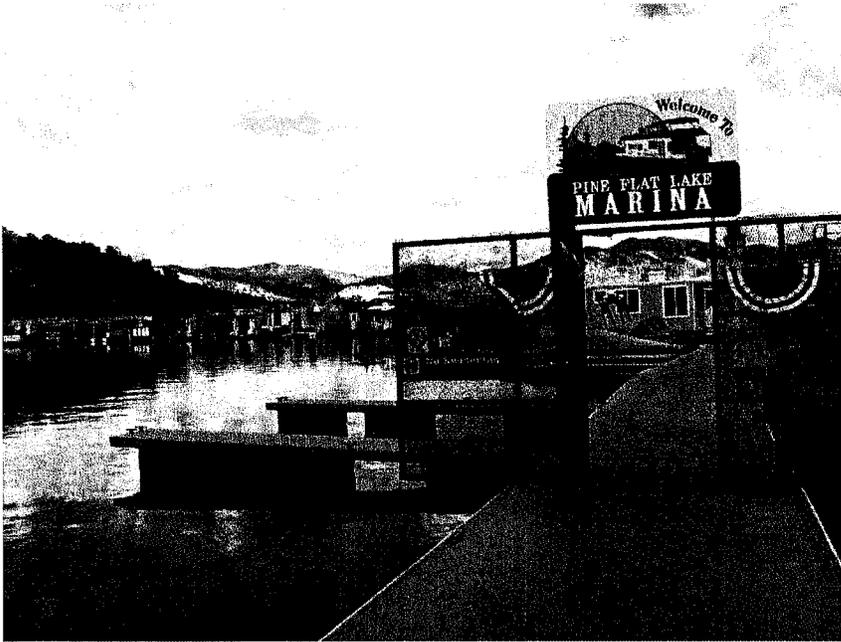
Lessons learned, included;

- be ready in advance, our time line was too tight so instead of starting when the study started on April 1 we were only ready for the July 4th weekend
- there were record snowfalls so the lakes were over full, flooding the parking and staging areas
- the mannequins were popular only to show an inflated life jacket, the other two, one for the vest type and one for the belt pack were not that exciting to the stores
- the public was aware of the new law, some OK, others not so much
- Not many of the facility managers were supportive, some gave enthusiastic support (Pine Flat Lake), others didn't want to be bothered (control lake)
- Some stores are too small to work with, inventory not enough for them to carry or the suppliers to help with
- The big stores, Wal-Mart, Target, must be approached over a year in advance, they base their spring inventory on last year's sales, buy in advance and then are not capable of ordering more product even though the demand is high, resulting in lost sales, dissatisfied customers but more important, a missed opportunity to get a customer (the stores and "ours") into a life jacket. This might be an educational opportunity for suppliers to be made aware of potential increased sales opportunities so buyers can take advantage, as West Marine did
- Rearming kits for inflatables are under promoted by the retailer and consequently a fault of the supplier not recognizing missed sales since the retailer doesn't understand the product
- Marinas would have taken up promotions by manufacturers for increasing product availability with some incentives such as assurances of readily available (overnight) product or bigger inventories with inventory reduction sales prices or

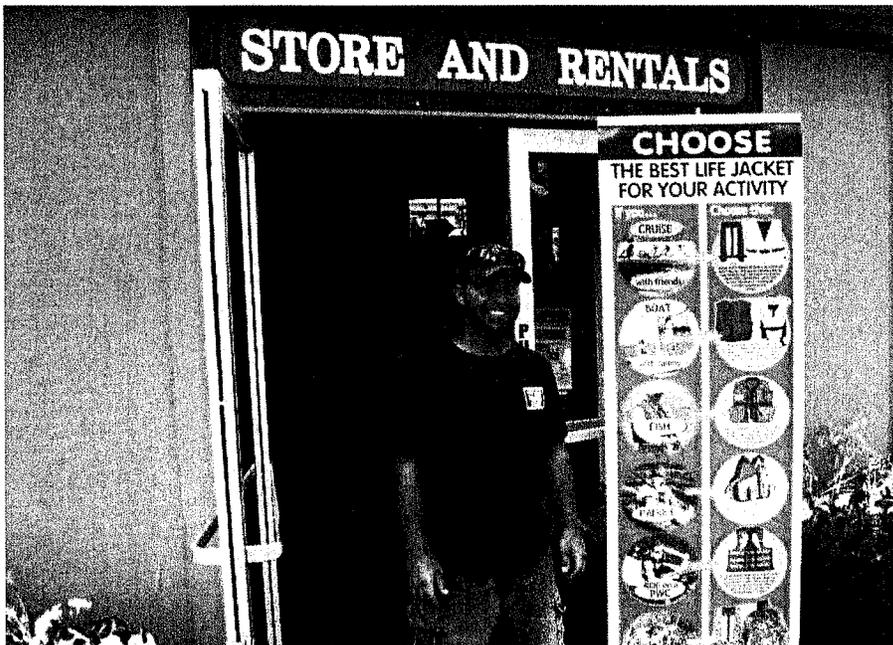
- returning some product at the end of the season
- ON THE POSITIVE SIDE the NSBC, working closely with subject matter experts and great guidance by the U.S. Coast Guard's grant technical manager designed a product that is described as "Choose the Best Life Jacket for Your Activity", an "IF" and "THEN" selection with a QR code that directs the customer to a more detailed description on how to choose the right life jacket.



Pull up Banner for choosing life jackets, it is displayed in halves, see below



Pine Flat Lake Marina, near Fresno California



Keith Brockman, Pine Flat Lake Marina manager stands next to POS pull up banner

- This was approved by the USCG and very well received by the retailers, marinas, Cabela's, West Marine, PFDMA and members of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council. One comment was that it finally got away from using "types". The Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA) also provided input into the Pull Up Banner.
- The Banner was designed as an 80 inch tall by two foot wide floor display so that it would not interfere with hiding product on shelves or hinder aisle traffic flow.

APRIL

- ❖ Initiated a grant project for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California.
- ❖ Developed a point of sale “checklist for choosing a life jacket”, a “checklist for choosing a life jacket at a glance” and a matrix for “if” “then” for choosing a life jacket that can be used as a sign or a pull up banner.
- ❖ Submitted a revised schedule of accomplishments to the POS life jacket grant to the USCG. The grant has been approved and work has started but funding is pending.
- ❖ Funding was approved April 21 retroactive to April 5, 2011

MAY

- ❖ Developed a point of sale “Checklist for Choosing a Life Jacket”, and a “checklist for choosing a life jacket at a glance”
- ❖ Developed a matrix for “if” “then” for choosing a life jacket that can be used as a sign or a pull up banner.
- ❖ Submitted a revised schedule of accomplishments to the POS life jacket grant to the USCG.
- ❖ Submitted the revised “marketing” and “project” plans to the USCG for approval and received both.
- ❖ Contacted and agreed to work with “Within Reach” for the graphics and production of the pull up banners. These will be 80”X2’, designed to stand alone in an aisle near the life jackets in marinas or stores.
- ❖ Ordered and received the “model forms” or mannequins for the inflatable life jacket display.
- ❖ Ordered and received the inflatable life jackets for the display.
- ❖ Ordered and received the CO2 cartridges for demonstrations at the display.
- ❖ Ordered and received the USBI “Which Life Jacket for You” table displays.
- ❖ Ordered and received the “Wear It” lenticular inflatable life jacket table display.

JUNE

- ❖ Continued development of point of sale “Checklist for Choosing a Life Jacket”, and a “checklist for choosing a life jacket at a glance”
- ❖ Received approval of the matrix for “if” “then” for choosing a life jacket that can be used as a sign or a pull up banner.
- ❖ Received approval of the pull up banner from the CG
- ❖ “Within Reach” completed the graphics and production of eight 80”X2’ pull up banners, designed to stand alone in an aisle near the life jackets in marinas or stores.
- ❖ Produced a survey form for willing vendors to answer questions regarding the sale of life jackets and public response to the mandatory wear requirement
- ❖ The CG GTM suggested covering the mannequins with t-shirts. DONE!
- ❖ The NSBC communications director was sent “Color Ons” for the wear it logo which she then colored and sent to me. I purchased t-shirts and ironed on the logos.
- ❖ Assembled the pull up banners, display signs, mannequins, inflatable life jackets

- ❖ Drove to Pine Flat Lake, met the ACOE Park Manager and discussed the project with him. He provided valuable insight and contact information. He agreed to post signs but we felt the banner would not warrant the limited traffic he has.
- ❖ Met with the Pine Flat Lake Marina manager and discussed with him the project. They sell life jackets including inflatables; require staff to wear belt packs.
- ❖ Placed mannequins, signs and a pull up banner with the marina manager
- ❖ Contacted the two small stores located near the lake, none actively sell life jackets, signs were posted
- ❖ Drove to Millerton Lake
- ❖ Met with State Park law enforcement, they are not taking any active role in regards to the study, have limited knowledge about it.
- ❖ Met with the marina manager, they do not sell life jackets, believe they have had an increase in visitation due to the study, agreed to provide a survey form and post a pull up banner. They send customers to Target, 10 miles away for life jackets
- ❖ Contacted Wal Mart, Target and West Marine in Clovis CA, a suburb of Fresno closest to the study lakes.
- ❖ Placed one display banner with the West Marine and one mannequin utilizing an inflated life jacket for their point of sale promotion
- ❖ Attended the PFDMA conference in St. Petersburg Florida, made a presentation, displayed and discussed the new pull up Point of Sale banner, requested they form a committee to discuss initiatives and learn from lessons being learned on the Pine Flat Lake POS project. There is interest in doing this, perhaps through the Life Jacket Tiger Team. Larry Meddock coins POS, not as Point of Sale, but as Point of Safe.

JULY

The USCG fast track grant for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California is well underway and monitoring progress.

AUGUST

The USCG fast track grant for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California is well underway and will be monitored through September.

SEPTEMBER

The USCG fast track grant for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California is essentially complete with now trying to do the surveys and begin writing the final report.

- ❖ The USCG fast track grant for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California was monitored for the duration of their project which ended after Labor Day.
- ❖ I contacted the Pine Flat Lake Marina manager and the West Marine store manager. Both were willing to continue to use the display material and send me a completed survey. Since there were only these two retailers it didn't make sense to expend travel funds to drive back to Fresno to pick up the banners, mannequins

and inflatables as long as they were still viable to meet the goal of point of sale merchandising.

- ❖ An extension for this grant was requested and approved so that we can evaluate the pull up banner at other venues and receive the surveys.

OCTOBER

The USCG fast track grant for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California is essentially complete with now trying to have the surveys completed and then begin writing the final report. I posted the banner at the NBSAC meeting in Washington DC where it was positively received by the Council and public attending the meeting. There is potential to work this into a national campaign. We have an extension on this grant as well.

- ❖ I posted the banner at the NBSAC meeting in Washington DC where it was positively received by the Council and public attending the meeting. One new Council member from the industry side said he was very impressed and offered to help promote the concept at numerous levels throughout the marketing spectrum. There is potential to work this into a national campaign with the increased interest and realization that this is an untapped, ignored but very viable marketing initiative.
- ❖ I gave the pull up banner to the USCG for display at Coast Guard Headquarters.

NOVEMBER

The USCG fast track grant for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California is essentially complete and with no additional surveys I am now writing the final report. The U.S. Coast Guard has posted the POS banner at the RBS office in Washington DC where it has received numerous positive comments.

DECEMBER

The USCG fast track grant for point of sale marketing of appropriate life jackets at the USACOE Pine Flat Lake mandatory wear program in California is essentially complete and with no additional surveys I am now writing the final report. The U.S. Coast Guard has posted the POS banner at the RBS office in Washington DC where it has received numerous positive comments.

JANUARY

NSBC Executive Director took the pull up banner to the USPS annual meeting in Florida where he again received very positive feedback including requests to purchase banners.

FEBRUARY

The NSBC ordered more banners to close out this grant in March.

MARCH

A pull up banner was displayed at the IBWSS in San Diego at the NSBC booth and at the exhibit hall booth for display of nonprofit deliverables and products. We again fielded inquiries regarding the banner and future marketing efforts. We used the banner as an award during the awards banquet.

One banner was shipped to a new marine retailer in Ohio who agreed to display and provide feedback and the types of questions related to customer interest generated at the store.

SCHEDULE of ACCOMPLISHMENTS AMMENDED

Task	Deadline	Comments
Agreement signed by USCG	May	Controlled by U.S.C.G. COMPLETED
Make contact with marina's, marine enforcement for recommendations on target large and small retailers, contact the retailers	May	This will include discussing previous year's sales and what the inventory issues are, their input on POS as well, also discuss POS location and customer traffic flow COMPLETED IN JUNE
Design the Point of Sale (POS) PFD/inflatable life jacket marketing material	April	Meet with representatives from boating industry with focus on retail to discuss methods of training, display, dealer issues, end of season inventory COMPLETED IN JUNE
Produce an adapted version of the 2010 Inflatable Life Jacket Education Kit for POS	April	This will include three mannequins, one for each inflatable style, one wearing belt, one suspender, one suspender inflated COMPLETED
Develop and produce Marketing Guide	April	REWORKED THE DOCUMENT IN JUNE
Project plan due to USCG	May 16	(60 days after signed agreement) too short a turnaround COMPLETED
Marketing plan due to USCG	May 16	(60 days after signed agreement) COMPLETED
Quarterly Report due to USCG	July 2	April-June will be 1 st quarter COMPLETED
Send to USCG for approval	May 16	COMPLETED
Travel to marina/retailers at control and study lakes, conduct inventory, set up POS, distribute and train associates with Guide/ Kit	NLT mid June	Discuss program, receive feedback, coordinate, have contacts to respond to questions, concerns, feedback from the public COMPLETED AT END OF JUNE
Develop evaluation processes and measures of effectiveness, pilot test through the season	June- Sept.	Make sure we are getting the sales, reorder information for what types of life jackets are "popular", any demand for rearming kits or other safety products not in inventory, anecdotal or if possible specific customer support or opposition during the season. SURVEY FORM COMPLETED AND DELIVERED WITH POS MATERIAL
Maintenance, first month frequent calls, then monthly check in	May- Labor Day	COMPLETED
Quarterly report due to USCG	August 15, 2011	July-August (these reports should be fast considering the timeline for this grant) COMPLETED REPORT FOR JULY-SEPTEMBER

Travel to marina/retailers at control and study lakes, conduct inventory, collect evaluations, leave life jackets but retrieve unwanted guide and kit material	Sept 15	This will wrap up the project on the ground TRAVEL WAS NOT DONE DUE TO RETAILERS AGREEING TO CONTINUE TO USE THE PRODUCT TO MEET POS OBJECTIVE
Final report to USCG	September 30, 2011	Submit report with final recommendations GRANT EXTENSION REQUESTED AND APPROVED, LESSONS LEARNED WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO A FINAL REPORT.
Grant extension work completed Final report submitted	March 2012	Displayed banner at the USPS annual conference and at the IBWSS. Purchased enough banners to close out. Lessons learned were used to submit new grant.

Make a commitment to choose a lifejacket that you will
WEAR ALL THE TIME
At a Glance, Checklist for choosing a lifejacket
FOR A DETAILED DESCRIPTION PLEASE REFER TO THE DOCUMENT
FOLLOWING THIS "AT A GLANCE"

Two basic types, inherently buoyant life jackets, inflatable life jackets (Manual or Automatic)

Inherently Buoyant Lifejackets

There is a life jacket made for almost any on water activity and care should be taken in making sure that your choice of life jacket is one that is suitable for its intended on water use. Make sure that it fits you properly.

Inflatable Lifejackets

Universal size, one size fits all, they typically have more flotation (20-35 pounds) than an inherently buoyant life jacket (typical is 15 pounds)
Inflatable life jackets are not approved for children less than 16 years of age, Personal Watercraft (PWC), towed water sports, whitewater or commercial activities. Inflatable life jackets are not appropriate for those who are weak swimmers.

Rearming Kits for Inflatables, you should buy the rearming kit that goes with it.

A lifejacket is very cheap LIFE insurance

Select the best quality and best fitting lifejacket that you can possibly afford.

Own more than one for different activities or times of year.

Test the fit and flotation design of your new life jackets in the water before venturing out in the boat.

- **check for approval label**- Must be U.S. Coast Guard approved
- **consider your type of boating activity**
 - large vessel or open small boat (under 21 feet)
 - open water (ocean, Great Lakes, Lake Tahoe) or near shore (small lakes, ponds, reservoirs, calm river)
 - fast water (white water, fast current rivers or flood conditions)
- **What mobility do you require?**
 - canoeing, kayaking, yacht racing, fishing, hunting, working, extended period in boat
- **are you choosing a personal vest or boat equipment?**
 - keep and care for your life jacket as personal gear, wear it!
 - have extras for guests in a range of sizes, especially for children
 - have additional lifejackets on board to supplement your life jackets in the event of a storm, fire or sinking
- **Fit & features**
 - comfort (there is a life jacket out there that will look and feel great on you - shop around!)
 - lift test (lift by the shoulders), jump test (in water controlled conditions)
 - must be snug and not ride up
 - children, handle and crotch straps recommended, do not buy a size to "grow into", it must fit now
 - consider dual purpose as clothing for cooler weather such as "float coats"
- **Time of year**
 - ventilation (mesh and breathable fabrics)
 - thermal protection for cold air and water
 - dual purpose as clothing
- **inflatables**
 - great devices for protection, comfort and mobility
 - must be frequently tested and maintained

Make a commitment to choose a lifejacket that you will
WEAR ALL THE TIME
About Lifejackets

There are **two basic types** of life jackets (also known as PFD's): inherently buoyant and inflatable. **Inherently buoyant life jackets** "have buoyancy capabilities due to their construction from unicellular foam or macro cellular elements. In contrast to inherently buoyant life jackets, **inflatable life jackets** are not made of inherently buoyant materials, but instead contain inflation devices that either automatically inflates when immersed in water, or must be inflated by the wearer using either an oral or manual inflation device (usually by pulling a cord). The inflation time for inflatable life jackets is relatively short (usually less than five seconds). **Manual inflatable life jackets** are available in vest, suspender, or belt pack or pouch styles. **Automatically inflatable life jackets** are available in jacket styles only and contain a small internal element that disintegrates when wet, which then activates a CO₂ inflation cartridge to inflate the device. **Inflatable life jackets are not approved** for children less than 16 years of age, Personal Watercraft (PWC), towed water sports, whitewater or commercial activities. Inflatable life jackets are not appropriate for those who are weak swimmers, since, even if an automatically inflating life jacket is used, in the event of a failure in the inflation mechanism, the wearer would have to use the backup inflation system to inflate the life jacket while staying afloat.

Inherently Buoyant Lifejackets

Inherently buoyant life jackets use inherently (naturally) buoyant materials, such as foam to provide buoyancy. Inherently buoyant life jackets are good for swimmers and non-swimmers alike as well as all age groups and sizes range from infant through youth right up to XXL adult sizes. **There is a life jacket made for almost any on water activity and care should be taken in making sure that your choice of life jacket is one that is suitable for its intended on water use.** For example there are high impact jackets designed for high-speed activities such as riding PWCs, waterskiing, or tubing. In addition to choosing one for your intended use, **make sure that it fits you properly.** It should be snug enough that it will not float up when you are in the water and comfortable enough that you will wear it whenever you are out on the water.

Inflatable Lifejackets

Inflatable life jackets are a more comfortable and lightweight option than the traditional buoyant lifejacket. They are a **universal size, one size fits all,** and usually **have more flotation (20-35 pounds)** than an **inherently buoyant life jacket (typical is 15 pounds)** When deflated they are compact and appear to resemble a big set of suspenders. Some inflatable lifejackets also come in a belt pack style. Both styles of inflatable lifejackets rely on an inflation chamber to provide buoyancy. They are inflated using a CO₂ cartridge which can be manually deployed or some are automatic and react to either immersion in water. All inflatable lifejackets also feature a backup oral inflation tube which also doubles as the deflation tube.

Rearming Kits for Inflatable Life Jackets

There are numerous rearming kits available for inflatable life jackets but you must purchase the one for your specific inflatable. When you originally purchase your **inflatable life jacket you should buy the rearming kit that goes with it.** You don't want to have it accidentally inflate, either manual or automatic, and not be able to rearm it properly. Keep your owner's manual so that you can refer to it in the future. You should also be able to find the size of the CO₂ cartridge printed on the life jacket.

Care of Your Inflatable Life Jacket

Like any life jacket, you should take care of it. When not in use, store it in a dry, cool, well ventilated area out of direct sunlight. Annually check its performance by orally inflating it and leaving it overnight to ensure there are no leaks. Check for excessive wear and tear and without the CO₂ cartridge in place, test the manual firing mechanism to ensure that the pin moves into a 'puncture position' and will indeed release the CO₂ when it is used. Make sure the CO₂ cartridge is screwed in hand tight and hasn't backed out due to typical boat motion.

Checklist for choosing a lifejacket

- **check for approval label**- Must be U.S. Coast Guard approved
- **consider your type of boating activity**
 - large vessel (with cabins) or open small boat (under 21 feet)
 - open water (ocean, Great Lakes, Lake Tahoe) or near shore (small lakes, ponds, reservoirs, calm river)
 - fast water (white water, fast current rivers or flood conditions)
- **what mobility do you require?**
 - choose the device you will wear at all times
 - canoeing, kayaking, yacht racing, fishing, hunting, working, extended period in boat
- **are you choosing a personal vest or boat equipment?**
 - keep and care for your life jacket as personal gear, wear it!
 - have extras for guests in a range of sizes (children too)
 - have additional lifejackets on board to supplement your life jackets in the event of a storm, fire or sinking
- **fit & features**
 - comfort (there is a life jacket out there that will look and feel great on you - shop around!)
 - lift test (lift by the shoulders), jump test (in water controlled conditions)
 - must be snug and not ride up
 - children, handle and crotch straps recommended, do not buy a size to "grow into", it must fit now
 - try your life jacket in the water before an emergency, swim float and play
 - consider dual purpose as clothing for cooler weather such as "float coats"
- **time of year**
 - ventilation (mesh and breathable fabrics)
 - thermal protection for cold air and water
 - dual purpose as clothing

- **inflatables**

- great devices for protection comfort and mobility
- must be tested and maintained

You deserve the best

Select the best quality and best fitting lifejacket that you can possibly afford.

Almost all lifejackets or PFD's are reasonably priced these days. Simple economic principles dictate that as they become more popular for wearing as sports gear, the styles and choice will continue to expand. Even the most sophisticated new devices offer great value for the protection offered and the value of the research and development that have gone into their creation. When you are out on the water in a comfortable vest or jacket that looks and feels great you'll be very glad that you spent a little more time, effort and money to choose the right device. And of course, the one time you need its protection in an emergency you'll feel it's the best money ever spent. For the price of a dress shirt or casual pants or cheap running shoes you can own a life jacket that will last for years if cared for properly.

A lifejacket is very cheap LIFE insurance that buys you peace of mind for yourself, your loved ones, your friends and co-workers that depend on you, and your fellow boaters, fishers, cottagers, etc., who want to truly enjoy their memories of great days on the water with you.

Big water, big boats, big foam

It's a smart idea to wear a life jacket that allows unrestricted freedom of movement at all times on board an open boat. Being immersed in the water is a situation of last resort. In the circumstances of being forced to ride out a storm or abandon ship a lifejacket with maximum flotation, turning ability and a survival suit that can provide protection from cold water will be necessary. You want as much freeboard or height above the water and protection from wave splash as possible. When rescue arrives you'll be glad for the survival colors, reflective tape, whistle, light, locator beacons and anything else that has kept you alive and visible in open water.

Check it out!

You will want to **test the fit and flotation design of your new life jackets in the water before venturing out in the boat.** The distribution of your own body mass is part of the overall flotation equation and until tested in the water you won't really have a sense of how well your life jacket suits and fits you. If it rides up, constricts your breathing, obstructs your vision or tips you forward you should exchange it for another design.

Expand your wardrobe

Bear in mind that different activities on or near the water may be best served by different devices. You may even wish to **own more than one for different activities or times of year.**