

Safe Powerboat Handling:

Your club might think of this as “*Drivers Education for Boaters.*” You wouldn’t allow your 16-year-old to drive your car without passing a drivers ed course that combines classroom and on-the-road instruction, would you? Likewise, JSA recommends you schedule the US Sailing Safe Powerboat Handling course as part of your regular junior sailing curriculum. This provides a great opportunity for Junior Instructors in Training and potential future Level I candidates in the 14-16 year old range to practice their skills extensively beginning one or two summers before their Level I Small Boat Instructor course at age 17 or 18. Parents and other club members may also benefit by taking the Safe Powerboat Handling course.

JSA requires that member clubs employ instructors who have passed the US Sailing Small Boat Level 1 Instructor course. In addition, JSA members voted in 2013 to require the US Sailing Safe Powerboat Handling certificate for newly certified Level 1 instructors in their first year of employment as an instructor. The certificate may be earned through a 1- or 2-day course, depending on the instructor’s experience.. US Sailing has reported that new instructors often do not have sufficient hands-on powerboat experience to pass the Level 1 course without a follow-up plan for improvement. So be sure to evaluate the powerboat handling skills of the instructors you hire and schedule them in the spring for the Safe Powerboat Handling course (2 days if do not have a state boating safety education certificate) or Accelerated Safe Powerboat Handling course (1 day if already have a state boating safety education certificate) or a powerboat handling challenge test, that may be found at this link <http://www.uspowerboating.com/courses>.

Full details of the Safe Powerboat Handling program is at the US Powerboating website that is run by US Sailing, complete with calendars of courses scheduled in Stamford CT, Bronx NY, Oyster Bay NY and other sites, plus lists of certified instructors by region if you want to run a course at your own club. <http://www.uspowerboating.com> > *Course Types, or Find a Course, or Instructor Training-Hire a Certified Instructor.*

And if your club hosts JSA events there is a special module for Safety, Rescue and Race Support that may be combined with Powerboat Handling to assure that all powerboat operators on the race course are properly trained.

Your club may also consider training developing an in-house Safe Powerboat Handling instructor resource by training club staff or club members through the Powerboat Instructor course. We know of some programs on the sound, such as Pequot and Pettipaug yacht clubs in Connecticut, which offer Safe Powerboat Handling courses taught by their own members. Having this local instructor resource may allow easier course scheduling and be an added source of revenue for your club. Contact the US Sailing Powerboat Training Manager 401-483-0800 to arrange this training for your club.