

Operation Paddle Smart

This FREE sticker might save your life!
Emergency or lost boat?

Information on this sticker could:

- Lead to your rescue
- Return your property to you

Please fill out this sticker and attach to your craft (examples include kayaks, canoes, rowboats, and skiffs).

For more information visit www.uscgboating.org

Paddle Smart Identification Sticker
IF FOUND - CONTACT

Cell: _____
Phone: _____
Name: _____

Use waterproof marker

When paddle craft such as kayaks or canoes are found adrift, in most cases, there is no way of determining whether or not individuals may be in distress. In these situations, the US Coast Guard (USCG) and other organizations initiate search and rescue (SAR) operations which may put rescue crews at risk, create pointless anxiety for family and friends as well as result in wasting valuable resources if no actual emergency exists.

Although it might surprise you, having timely access to some basic information can make the difference between wasting valuable time and resources on non value added activities and actually saving lives.

While recreational and commercial vessels display hull registration numbers or a vessel name that allow for the owner to be identified, paddle craft and small non-power boats such as kayaks, canoes, row boats and small sail boats typically do not provide a way of identifying the owner or allowing them to be contacted. To help address this problem, the **USCG and Coast Guard Auxiliary have launched Operation Paddle Smart to create an improvised means of vessel identification for small non-power watercraft.** This program, although primarily aimed at paddle craft owners, can benefit all vessel owners, boaters, emergency responders and taxpayers (by reducing the money wasted on unnecessary SAR cases).

The Paddle Smart weather-proof sticker, applied to small craft by vessel owners, is intended to help: save lives, recover missing property, reduce the time, effort and resources expended on non-emergency SAR and foster safety awareness among small craft owners.

Each sticker provides room to list the small craft owner's name, phone and cell phone numbers using a waterproof permanent marker.

Having this information available will assist in the initial SAR investigation phase if the craft is found a drift. It is important to put two valid phone numbers on the sticker, since a cell phone could end-up in the water if the vessel turns over. The second number provides an alternate way to check if an emergency exists or to arrange for return of property to its owner.

Being able to identify if a real emergency exists is a major benefit to the Coast Guard, since massive resources and thousands of dollars are expended each year searching for lost

Paddle Smart Identification Sticker
IF FOUND - CONTACT

Phone 1: _____
Phone 2: _____
Name: _____

Use waterproof marker

boaters. If the Coast Guard can avoid deploying resources to search for someone who is not missing or in danger, lots of time and tax payer money will be saved and rescue crews can avoid unnecessarily being put at risk plus family and friends can be spared pointless anxiety.

Operation Paddle Smart is simple, beneficial and free. Its goal is to educate paddle-sport enthusiasts how to stay safe, be responsible boaters and help emergency responders in SAR type situations. It could be the key to a safer and more enjoyable boating season as well as help recover your property if lost and it might even help save your life. It provides a focal point for boating and paddling organizations, retailers and others to work together to promote paddle sport safety as well as being an information source for all paddlers and small boaters.

[Request Free Paddle Smart Stickers, Materials or Information](#)

Paddle Smart materials and stickers are available from US Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 23-1 Annapolis, MD (<http://AnnapolisCGAux.org>) and its recreational boating partners and partner agencies.

