



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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**DLNR REMINDER: PERSONAL WATER CRAFT CERTIFICATION
IS REQUIRED FOR THRILL CRAFT OPERATORS**

HONOLULU – The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) is reminding the public that certification in the safe use of a thrill craft, also known as jet skis and Personal Water Craft (PWC), is required to operate these types of vessels on State waters.

“Their acceleration, speed capabilities and maneuverability make thrill craft fun to ride,” said Laura H. Thielen, DLNR chairperson. “These same attributes also place them in the high-risk category as far as waterborne vessels go.”

Their size, relatively low cost and fuel efficiency make them cost-efficient and easy to store, and that undoubtedly contributed to the rise in their numbers.

“The proliferation of thrill craft and the potential for injuries stemming from use of these vessels prompted the department to implement a rule in 2005 requiring all thrill craft operators to be certified,” said Thielen.

In order to meet the need for certification, DLNR's Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR) worked with the community colleges and local water safety professionals to develop two courses, one for basic PWC operation and another for Tow-In Surfing certification.

In addition to basic rules-of-the-road instruction, these two PWC certification courses cover such information as local ocean safety principles and practices; historical, cultural, and customary practices of Hawai‘i's ocean users; and rules or laws pertaining to protected species and thrill craft operation in the State.

“Although we have had the rule in place for quite some time and a system for certifying operators, not a lot of people know about the requirement. As a result, a great number of thrill craft enthusiasts are operating their vessels without the proper certification,” said Thielen.

People operating their thrill craft without the required certification can be fined \$50-\$1000.

Windward Community College and its associated colleges on Kaua‘i, Maui and Hawai‘i Island are the only entities that offer the State-approved thrill craft certification course needed to operate a thrill craft in Hawai‘i.

Cost for the one-day Recreational Thrill Craft Operators Safety Educational Course for PWC certification is \$109. Cost for the two-day Ocean Safety Educational Course for tow-in surfing certification is \$139. The course fee includes a manual, certificate of completion and laminated certificate that an operator can carry on the jet ski.

WCC’s schedule of training classes for the rest of 2009 is as follows:

Kaua‘i June 27-28 (call Kaua‘i Community College at 808-245-8318),

O‘ahu July 18 (Rec Thrill Craft course only, call WCC 235-7433 to register),

Hilo August 1-2 (call Hawai‘i Community College at 808-974-7531),

O‘ahu September 5-6 (call WCC 235-7433 to register),

Maui October 3-4 (call WCC 235-7433 to register),

O‘ahu November 7-8 (call WCC 235-7433 to register).

“We strongly advise uncertified thrill craft operators to enroll in one of the scheduled courses, not just for their own safety, but for the safety of all who enjoy recreation activities in Hawai‘i’s waters,” concluded Thielen.

More information on operating a PWC in Hawai‘i is posted at:

http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/dbor/bor_pwcs.htm

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DOBOR operates and manages 20 harbors, 50 ramps, 2,122 moorings and berths and 19 piers across the state. The division works in close partnership with DLNR's Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) and the U.S. Coast Guard to make nearshore waters safe. The division is also responsible for registering all vessels in Hawai‘i which are not documented by the U.S. Coast Guard and for regulating and permitting surf meets, canoe and yachting regattas, ocean swimming events and other ocean events with the concurrence of the U.S. Coast Guard.

For more information news media may contact:

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