



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Equip Yourself: Gear Up For Cold Weather Boating

Lake Shelbyville – Cold weather is here so if you are planning on going boating at Lake Shelbyville the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would like to remind you to gear up before venturing out on the lake. Boaters this time of year need protection from hypothermia, both on deck and in the event of falling overboard. Cold water shortens in-water survival time, making a quick rescue essential. Fortunately, you have options whether you hunt, fish or cruise on cold water. Choose the right gear to increase your chances of surviving a cold-weather mishap.

1. Float Coat

A float coat is a comfortable type of life jacket to wear during cold weather because it not only provides flotation when needed it provides warmth whenever worn. Before you go boating make sure your float coat is U.S. Coast Guard approved and fits you properly.

2. Immersion or Survival Suit

Survival suits protect you from the elements and provide flotation and hypothermia protection if you enter the water. Wearing a survival suit can increase survival time in cold water.

3. Dry Suit

Dry suits can be instantly drawn tight to prevent water from entering. Appropriate thermal layers worn beneath the dry suit provide insulation and they are not buoyant. Dry suits are suitable for intentional entry into the water, but provide no passive protection if you fall in.

4. Personal Position Locator Beacon

Otherwise known as a PLB, a personal position locator beacon is a scaled down version of the Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB). When immersed in water or manually activated both EPIRBs and PLBs transmit a signal that allows rescuers to pinpoint your location.

5. Personal Emergency Locator Light

An emergency light worn and activated if a person is in the water can attract the attention of rescuers, providing a much more visible target than your head in the water. The bright, flashing light increases the chances of being spotted by rescuers or a passing boater.

6. Whistle

Attracting attention will increase your chances of surviving in the water. Whistles are a cheap and simple way to make noise without exhausting yourself. Rescuers are trained to turn off the boat engines and listen for a period of time while they are on search and rescue missions or a nearby boater may hear the signal. Conventional whistles don't work if the "pea" inside is wet, so choose a waterproof model.

Don't be tempted to skip proper cold weather clothing and gear. Be sure to wear a life jacket such as a float coat when boating. Dress in layers to provide maximum protection and warmth against the harsh weather. Wear a hat and gloves for protection against heat loss.

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