

SB 5145-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Declares an intent to establish a boater safety education program that contributes to the reduction of accidents and increases the enjoyment of boating by all operators of all recreational vessels on the waters of this state.

Authorizes and directs the commission to work with agencies and organizations representing nonmotorized vessel activities and individuals operating nonmotorized vessels to decrease accidents of operators in these vessels.

Encourages boating safety programs that use volunteer and private sector efforts to enhance boating safety and education for operators of nonmotorized vessels to work closely with the state parks and recreation commission in its efforts to reduce all boating accidents in this state.

Provides that, as part of the boating safety education program, the commission shall establish a program to be phased over eleven years starting July 1, 2005, with full implementation by January 1, 2016. The period July 1, 2005, through December 31, 2007, will be program development, boater notification of the new requirements for mandatory education, and processing cards to be issued to individuals having taken an approved course prior to January 1, 2008.

Provides that no person shall operate or permit the operation of motor driven boats and vessels with a mechanical power of fifteen horsepower or greater unless the person: (1) Is at least twelve years of age, except that an operator of a personal watercraft shall comply with the age requirements under RCW 79A.60.190; and

(2) (a) Has in his or her possession a boater education card, unless exempted; or (b) is accompanied by and is under the direct supervision of a person sixteen years of age or older who is in possession of a boater education card, or who is not yet required to possess the card as provided in the program phase in this act.

Creates the boating safety education certification account within the state treasury. All receipts from fees collected for the issuance of a boater safety education card shall be deposited in the boating safety education certification account and shall be appropriated only to the state parks and recreation commission to be used only for the administration of this act. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.