



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICE

Aaron Gross, Director

Stand-up Paddleboards

In October of 2008, the United States Coast Guard made the determination that stand-up paddleboards (SUP) are considered vessels and thereby subject to certain boating safety regulations.

So what does this mean for a stand-up paddleboard user? When using a stand-up paddleboard beyond the limits of swimming, bathing, or surfing areas, users are required to be prepared just as they would if they were operating a traditional vessel.

- All SUP users on coastal waters, when not in a bathing, swimming, or surf zone, are **required by law** to have a Type I, II, or III personal floatation device (PFD) aboard.
- All SUP users on inland lakes or rivers, when not in a bathing or swimming area, are **required by law** to have a Type I, II, or III personal floatation device (PFD) aboard.

**SUP users may elect to wear a Type V inflatable device; however, the device must be worn on the person in accordance with legal requirements.*

Whether you are a seasoned paddleboarder or just starting out, here are some tips for your next trip:

- Wear a lifejacket (PFD)
- Carry a whistle
- Be a competent swimmer and know how to self rescue
- Know the local regulations and rules of the road
- Understand the elements and hazards – winds, tidal ranges, current, and terrain
- Be defensive – don't go where you aren't supposed to and avoid other swimmers and boaters
- Know your limits
- Take a safety course



For more information, please contact:

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Or visit us at www.mass.gov/ole