



U.S. Coast Guard Issues Marine Safety Alert for Parasailing Operations

Updated: Mon 5:09 PM, Aug 05, 2013

WASHINGTON, D.C. The US Coast Guard is sending a message to parasailing operators across the country... Clean-up your act.

The Coast Guard issued the marine safety alert regarding parasailing operations Monday, citing 11 parasailing passenger deaths and 52 injuries nationwide since 2006.

The latest, involving 2 Indiana girls badly injured in the crash in Panama City Beach last month, has generating new calls for state regulations.

But Coast Guard officials have issued this stern warning for the operators to self regulate.

They say they expect licensed mariners to follow all regulations for safe vessel operations, and parasail operators to follow established standards.

They want parasail operators to evaluate all safety risks including weather their equipment conditions and the Coast Guard expect the parasailing industry to share best practices and develop operational standards to maximize safety and prevent marine casualties.

Most parasail fatalities and injuries are related to towline failure.

"The Coast Guard expects licensed mariners to follow all regulations regarding safe vessel operations and has an expectation of parasail operators to follow established standards," said Rear Adm. Joseph Servidio, assistant commandant for prevention policy.

"Parasail operators must evaluate and consider all safety risks before getting underway, including weather conditions and condition and maintenance of equipment, in order to ensure safe parasailing activities. In the future, we expect the parasailing industry and related industry associations to share best practices and develop operational standards to maximize safety and prevent marine casualties."

Additionally, the Coast Guard asks those who decide to engage in this activity to consider the risks and to understand current safety standards for parasailing. Parasailing equipment is not regulated or inspected by the federal government.

All of the incidents have had several common factors unique to parasailing. The mnemonic



"Know your ROPES," briefly summarized below, was established to remind parasail operators of important safety issues that may help prevent future casualties:

R is for Remember: Remember that most parasail fatalities and injuries are related to the failure of the towline.

O is for Observe and Monitor: Observe and monitor weather conditions continuously. ASTM Standard F2993-13 published April 1, 2013, is a "Standard Guide for Monitoring Weather Conditions for Safe Parasail Operation."

P is for Prepare: Prepare for emergencies by having well-documented procedures and conducting crew training to ensure proficiency in responding to various types of emergencies.

E is for Ensure: Ensure that all of your equipment is properly maintained on a continual basis.

S is for Safety: Safety is up to you, the parasail operator. The Coast Guard ensures safe operation of vessels, but does not regulate or inspect parasail equipment or regulate parasail operations.

You may read "Know your ROPES" in its entirety on the Coast Guard's Homeport page.

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<http://www.wjhg.com/home/headlines/218370901.html>

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