



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT

Inspections and Compliance Directorate

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Safety Alert 18-25

SEA-DOO SWITCH CAPSIZING HAZARD

The Sea-Doo Switch is a jet-driven pontoon vessel featuring a center hull and two outboard sponsons that provide buoyancy and stability. Since the Switch's introduction in 2022, multiple capsizings have led to several fatalities and severe injuries. These capsizings have occurred when the vessel was operated with trim by the bow and the bow "digging into" the water. Weather conditions and poor seamanship do not appear to be significant contributing factors.

Vessel Design and Unsafe Operating Condition:

The Switch is designed such that while at rest, its center hull allows water to enter the hull, and while operating on a plane, the entrained water empties. However, until the water fully empties, trim by the bow can occur, especially with passenger weight forward. The dynamics are such that any abrupt change in speed or direction could induce forces sufficient to cause capsizing, especially when slowing down towards idle speed.



Figure 1- Image of Sea-Doo Switch

Safety Recall: The Sea-Doo Switch's parent company, Bombardier Recreational Products (BRP), issued a recall of the entire Switch line in February 2025 titled "Front Overload – Risk of Capsizing¹":

Improper distribution of passengers and cargo weight could overload the front of the watercraft and cause instability, nosediving and possibly lead to capsizing. The condition worsens if water evacuation from the hull is not optimal. This could cause serious injuries or even death.

The recall corrective action includes partial sealant application to specific sections of the hull, two on-product warning labels, and an addendum to the Operator's guide.

The latest capsizing, which resulted in three fatalities, occurred on a Sea-Doo Switch repaired according to BRP's recall guidance. As a result, the Coast Guard is currently evaluating the recall repair procedures to determine if additional action is required to mitigate the hazard.

¹ The recall is available at:

<https://sea-doo.brp.com/us/en/owner-zone/safety/safety-recalls/front-overload-risk-of-capsizing.html>.

The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that Sea-Doo Switch operators take the following precautions to minimize the risk of capsizing:

- Avoid operating with any trim by the bow. Weight distribution must be towards the stern.
- Avoid sudden changes in speed or direction at non-planing speeds.
- If trim by the bow occurs, gradually reduce the throttle and reposition passengers further aft.
- When approaching or coming off of a plane, exercise awareness of instability or nosediving.

Please report any occurrences to the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety by submitting a Consumer Safety Defect Report at <https://uscgboating.org/php-contact-form/consumer-safety-defect-report.php> or via email at RBSCCompliance@uscg.mil.

The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that marine law enforcement officers:

- Be aware of the published safety recall and engage with Sea-Doo Switch operators to ensure they are informed of the recall and the operating recommendations provided. If a Sea-Doo Switch is observed to be trimmed by the bow while underway, the operator should be instructed to shift weight aft to correct the condition.

This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. It has been developed by the Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety and distributed by the Office of Investigations and Casualty Analysis. Questions may be sent to RBSCCompliance@uscg.mil.