



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT
Inspections and Compliance Directorate

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Safety Alert 08-22

SLOW DOWN, LOOK AROUND AND BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS WHEN TRANSITING NEAR LAUNCH AREAS

While transiting a mixed-use waterway, a motor vessel capsized a kayak in its wake, jettisoning the kayaker into the water. This incident occurred near a known kayak launch and was the third such event within a short time span. In the most recent case, the motor vessel's operator failed to see the kayaker in the water while traveling at 16 knots with clear visibility (see photo).

Boat launch areas facilitate access to the nation's waterways and it is vitally important that all boaters exercise caution in these areas.

To ensure the safety of all waterway users, the Coast Guard offers the following reminders:

- Local authorities should consider enacting speed limits near boat launches and place buoy markers for those speed zones.
- All vessels are responsible for their wakes and operators should consider reducing headway to avoid negatively impacting activities, docks, wildlife, shorelines, and smaller craft (e.g., fishing boats, canoes, paddleboards, and kayaks).
- The Navigation Rules require all vessels to operate at safe speed for the conditions.
- The Navigation Rules require all vessels to maintain a proper lookout at all times by sight and hearing. If additional personnel on the vessel are available, assign them to assist as lookouts to identify potential hazards including other vessels and persons in the water.
- Motorized vessels should render assistance as they are capable and without endangering their own vessel and crew or others.



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