

**Bermuda Water Safety Council
For Press Conference**

The Summer Season is about to begin, and once again, the Bermuda Water Safety Council would like to remind the public of the need to take special precautions to ensure a safe and pleasant season.

The Council's mission, to promote and encourage water safety, is broad and includes any potential threat that may result when one is close to the water, whether near the ocean or land based water sources such as swimming pools and open water tanks etc.

Last year there were numerous near drownings, and once again we would like to remind parents and guardians how quickly children can get into trouble when near the ocean or swimming pool. Most child accidents around the water are caused by inattention.

Remember to ensure that someone responsible is watching young children at all times when near the water.

This year, the Council is emphasizing safe boat handling and the marine rules of the road. We would like to encourage boaters to become more aware of the basic rules when approaching other vessels, to become knowledgeable of the safety equipment aboard, and proper mooring and docking techniques.

In April of this year, nearly 60 people participated in a Water Safety Council boating safety seminar at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club. Participants were rotated through 5 areas of safe boat handling. The seminar was mostly hands-on as most of the rotations were on boats out on the water.

The feedback from participants was, that more of such sessions should be held. Therefore the Council is already planning another

safety seminar in the fall of this year. This sessions may once again include the use of rockets and flares.

Please visit our website or our Facebook site to find out how you can become a safer boater. We would especially encourage new boaters to enroll in one of several boating and piloting courses such as those at the Bermuda College, the Warwick Community School and the Royal Yachting Association power boat course at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club. Some local insurers offer discounts to those who have taken boat safety courses.

Finally we would like to acknowledge the role of the Marine Police as they work diligently to encourage and enforce safe boating in Bermuda. We appreciate their support and look forward to working with them throughout this year's boating and swimming season. We wish everyone a safe summer.

Ralph Richardson

Chairman Bermuda Water Safety Council