



PENNSYLVANIA FISH & BOAT COMMISSION  
 BOATING & WATER SAFETY AWARENESS  
**BWSA COURSE**  
**FACT SHEET**

PURPOSE	The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission's Boating & Water Safety Awareness course was developed to promote boating and water safety education by involving students in the proper procedures for recreational boating and having the students demonstrate proficiency in boating and water safety.
STUDENTS	This course is designed for school students in sixth through twelfth grades. Through appropriate adaptation, the course may also be used to teach scouts or youth groups.
INSTRUCTORS	This course is taught by Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission employees and certified volunteer instructors. Instructor training can be arranged by contacting the Commission's Education Section or the appropriate Regional Outreach & Education Coordinator.
CLASS TIME	A minimum of eight (8) hours is required.
CERTIFICATES	Boating Safety Education Certificates are required for <b>all operators of personal watercraft, regardless of age, and for boat operators born after January 1, 1982 that operate motorboats of more than 25 horsepower.</b> Students who successfully complete this course may apply for a Boating Safety Education Certificate issued by the Commission. To receive a Boating Safety Education Certificate, the student must send a check or money order for \$10.00 to the Commission. The Boating & Water Safety Awareness course meets the mandatory education standards set by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) for motorboat operation, and Commission certification is accepted in most states with mandatory education requirements.
CONTENT	The BWSA course includes both classroom and in-water work. Students get the opportunity to experience and practice skills in a pool or protected open-water area. The course contains seven chapters followed by a 50-question examination. A passing grade of 80% must be achieved. Instructors provide course materials to the students.

<p>COURSE OUTLINE</p>	<p><b>Chapters 1-5</b> (required for certification) are taught in classroom sessions and cover such subjects as boat terminology, PA boating waters, legal requirements, special water activities, fire prevention, required and recommended equipment, hazards to boaters, accident prevention, navigation rules, PA operation requirements, and aids to navigation.  <b>Chapters 6-7</b> (required for certification) are in-water sessions and include demonstrations and practice in: use of personal flotation devices (PFDs), cold-water survival, and rescue techniques  <b>Chapters 8-9</b> (optional) are in-water sessions and include boat based rescue procedures.</p>	
<p>HOW DO I FIND A BWSA COURSE?</p>	<p>Commission Boating Course Hotline PA Fish &amp; Boat Commission Web Site Contact a ROEC (see below)</p>	<p><b>1-888-PA-FISH1</b> or <b>1-888-723-4741</b> <a href="http://www.fishandboat.com">www.fishandboat.com</a></p>
<p>HOW DO BECOME A BWSA INSTRUCTOR?</p>	<p>Contact PFBC Regional Education staff. Instructors must complete the BWSA student course and obtain a boating safety education certificate, in addition to completing instructor level training.</p>	
<p>COMMISSION EDUCATION OFFICE</p>	<p>Bureau of Outreach, Education &amp; Marketing Education Section</p>	<p><b>717-705-7833</b> FAX: <b>717-705-7831</b> E-mail: <a href="mailto:ra-be@pa.gov">ra-be@pa.gov</a></p>
<p>PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES</p>	<p>Persons with disabilities who wish to participate in a Pennsylvania Fish &amp; Boat Commission program and anticipate the need for special accommodations should contact the Bureau of Boating &amp; Outreach, a Regional Outreach &amp; Education Coordinator, or one of the Commission's regional law enforcement offices listed below.</p>	

PFBC REGIONAL  
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICES

NORTHWEST 814-337-0444 FAX: 814- 337-0579	<u><b>Counties</b></u> Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Warren
SOUTHWEST 814-445-8974 FAX: 814-445-3497	<u><b>Counties</b></u> Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington, Westmoreland
NORTHEAST 570-477-5717 FAX: 570-477-3221	<u><b>Counties</b></u> Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming
SOUTHEAST 717-626-0228 FAX: 717-626-0486	<u><b>Counties</b></u> Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Schuylkill
NORTHCENTRAL 814-359-5250 FAX: 814-359-5254	<u><b>Counties</b></u> Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Jefferson, Lycoming, Montour, McKean, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Tioga, Union
SOUTHCENTRAL 717-486-7087 FAX: 717-486-8227	<u><b>Counties</b></u> Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, York

REGIONAL OUTREACH AND EDUCATION COORDINATORS (ROEC)

*(Same counties apply for each ROEC region as listed above)*

**For the ROEC e-mail addresses on the Commission web site, click on “Directory,” URL as follows: [http://sites.state.pa.us/PA\\_Exec/Fish\\_Boat/dir.htm](http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/Fish_Boat/dir.htm)**

NORTHWEST	<b>814-336-2426</b> FAX: 814-337-0579	NORTHCENTRAL	<b>717-705-7919</b> FAX: 717-705-7831
SOUTHWEST	<b>814-443-9841</b> FAX: 814-445-3497	NORTHEAST	<b>570-477-2206</b> FAX: 570-477-2621
SOUTHCENTRAL	<b>717-705-7919</b> FAX: 717-705-7831	SOUTHEAST	<b>570-477-2206</b> FAX: 570-477-2621