

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## **Don't Forget to Update Navigational Charts This Spring: Alliance Website Shows Boaters How**

*As boaters face upcoming boating season, industry organization stresses need for recreational boaters to carry accurate navigational tools*

**St. Paul, MN—April 16, 2012**—The Alliance for Safe Navigation, whose mission is to raise awareness about the importance of up-to-date navigational information, today released a list of resources recreational boaters should turn to as part of their spring commissioning. The [list](#) stresses the importance of having accurate navigational tools onboard and reminds the boating public that getting chart updates is critical and a very real component of boating safety.

“Just as people need to ready their boats for the upcoming boating season, they need to ensure that their navigational tools are ready,” says Robert Sweet, recent national educational officer for the United States Power Squadrons. “Using accurate charts and keeping them updated is a simple, affordable step to take to prepare for the boating season and ensure safety on the water.”

The alliance points to its annual survey as evidence of the fact that boaters do get themselves into trouble. Its 2011 survey found that over 25 percent of respondents experienced a grounding within the last five years, with some damage as high as \$10,000.

One proactive measure boaters can take is to carry accurate and up-to-date navigational tools. The United States Coast Guard (USCG) issues Local Notice to Mariners (LNMs) that contain changes to current charts that are necessary due to obstructions, shifting shoals, changes in aids, etc. Most electronic navigation systems in use today offer easy and inexpensive updates that are an essential part of the annual “electronics tune-up.” Yet according to the alliance’s survey, boaters tend not to update their electronic charts or track these changes: 70 percent of respondents said they were either aware of LNMs and didn’t obtain them or they were not aware of LNMs at all.

The alliance also encourages boaters to take a boating safety course as part of spring commissioning. The United States Power Squadrons, for example, provides courses and seminars on a variety of safe boating subjects, two of which are “Basic Coastal Navigation” and “How to Use a Chart.”

To see the latest USCG Notice to Mariners for your location, visit [Notice to Mariners](#). For more information or to find out how many changes have been made to your charts, go to [www.allianceforsafenavigation.org](http://www.allianceforsafenavigation.org).

### **About the Alliance for Safe Navigation**

The Alliance for Safe Navigation ([www.allianceforsafenavigation.org](http://www.allianceforsafenavigation.org)) consists of industry leaders that all share a commitment to boating safety. The goal of the alliance is to raise the boating community’s understanding of, and appreciation for, up-to-date navigational information. The alliance encourages mariners to recognize the high number of changes made to their charts and to keep their electronic and paper charts accurate, which is inexpensive and easy. Sponsored by NOAA, the alliance is made up of BoatU.S., Jeppesen, OceanGrafix, the Sea Tow Foundation, and the United States Power Squadrons.