



# NEWS RELEASE

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

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## **New Carlyle Lake Life Jacket Wear Requirement**

**Carlyle Lake** – Currently in Illinois, only those under the age of 13 and operators of personal watercraft are required by State law to wear life jackets while boating. However, the US Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District has announced that a pilot test of a mandatory life jacket wear regulation is being implemented at Carlyle Lake. This mandate requires that life jackets be worn by single occupants in all vessels 21 feet and under in length, while underway using the main propulsion motor. Second occupants must be at least 12 years of age with a Boating Safety Certificate issued by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources or at least 18 years of age without a certificate. This pilot test is applicable on Carlyle Lake from Hitogi Access (including the Wildlife Area) to the Old Rt. 50 Bridge.

The decision for Carlyle Lake to conduct the pilot test of mandatory life jacket wear for those boating alone in vessels 21 feet and under in length, while under way using the main propulsion motor, was based on the number of drowning that have occurred in the past years. There were four fatalities at Carlyle Lake in 2010 and they may have survived if they had been wearing a life jacket. Incidentally, two of those victims were boating alone.

It is a good idea for everyone to wear a life jacket when boating or swimming and the focus of the Corps' efforts are based on drowning statistics. According to U.S. Coast Guard statistics, seven out of ten boaters who drowned were in boats less than 21 feet in length. Smaller boats have less stability which increases the chance of someone falling overboard. Re-boarding small vessels after someone falls overboard is difficult to do without assistance, even when there is a re-boarding ladder. According to Corps' fatality statistics, 90 percent of those who drowned in the past 13 years were not wearing a life jacket. In the St. Louis District alone, falls (overboard, docks, shore etc.) are the leading cause of drowning. By wearing a life jacket at all times, it gives a rescuer a chance to render aid and hopefully save a life. Be a survivor and wear a life jacket for all those who love and depend on you.

The Carlyle Lake Project Office is seeking input concerning the new proposed policy. To provide input via email, send to [carlylelake@usace.army.mil](mailto:carlylelake@usace.army.mil) or contact the Carlyle Lake Project Office at (618)594-2484.

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Hard copy questionnaire forms will be available at the Carlyle Lake Project Office, Carlyle Lake Visitor Center, Eldon Hazlet State Park Office and Campground Fee Attendant Booths. Questionnaire forms can be mailed to the Carlyle Lake Project Office at 801 Lake Road, Carlyle, IL 62231. A public meeting to solicit feedback will be held later this year.

For more information or to make comments contact the Carlyle Lake Project Office at (618) 594-2484 or email us at [carlylelake@usace.army.mil](mailto:carlylelake@usace.army.mil).

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