

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

U. S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

America's Volunteer Lifesavers SM

SpeedGram

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Naval Vessel Protection Zones

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN PUBLIC EDUCATION CLASSES IMMEDIATELY.

The Coast Guard has established a temporary regulation for the safety and security of U.S. naval vessels. These zones are necessary to provide for the safety and security of such vessels.

This temporary regulation is in effect until June 15, 2002, at which time a final rule will be issued. We do not expect any changes in the final rule. The regulation establishes the zone as follows:

- All vessels within 500 yards of a U.S. naval vessel shall operate at the minimum speed necessary to maintain a safe course and shall proceed as directed by the official patrol (the senior naval officer present in command or designee, or a Coast Guard commissioned, warrant or petty officer).
- No vessel is allowed within 100 yards of a U.S. naval vessel, unless authorized by the official patrol.
- Vessels requesting to pass within 100 yards of a U.S. naval vessel shall contact the official patrol on VHF-FM channel 16. The official patrol may permit vessels that can operate safely only in a navigable channel to pass within 100 yards of a U.S. naval vessel in order to ensure a safe passage in accordance with the Navigation Rules.
- Commercial vessels anchored in a designated anchorage area may be permitted to remain at anchor within 100 yards of passing naval vessels.
- Violations of the Naval Vessel Protection Zone are a felony offense, punishable by up to six years in prison and fines of up to \$250,000.

In addition to the Naval Protection Zone, the Coast Guard advises all vessels to observe and avoid all security zones that may be in place in a given area. Avoid commercial port operation areas, especially those that involve military, cruise line, or petroleum facilities. Violators will be perceived as a threat, and will face a quick, determined, and severe response.

NOTE:

If students ask, as they normally do, "What is a quick, determined, and severe response?", a suggested response is that it means whatever the ARMED PERSONNEL guarding the facility think it means!

Do not stop or anchor beneath bridges or in the channel. If you do, then expect to be boarded by law enforcement officials.

Keep a sharp eye out for anything that looks peculiar or out of the ordinary. Report all activities that seem suspicious to the local authorities, the Coast Guard, and the port or marina security. Do not approach or challenge those acting in a suspicious manner.

John VanOsdol, DC-E