



# SAVED BY THE BEACON PRESS KIT



[savedbythebeacon.com](http://savedbythebeacon.com)



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## What is 'Saved by the Beacon'?

Boaters, whether new or experienced, love the adventure and fun of a day spent on the water. However, they also know it's important to be safe as accidents can happen fast. Each year, hundreds of recreational boaters' lives are lost. These people may still be alive if they had worn a life jacket, followed boating safety procedures, or had an emergency locator beacon on board their boat or worn on their life jacket.

The Saved by the Beacon National Safe Boating Campaign, led by the National Safe Boating Council, will help recreational boaters understand the importance of emergency locator (406 MHz) beacons and how to use them correctly in the case of a boating emergency.

Saved by the Beacon emphasizes the difference between the use of EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons) for one's boat versus PLBs (Personal Locator Beacons) for one's life jacket. Also, the campaign compares the benefits of emergency locator beacons to other commonly used communications devices such as VHF-FM (DSC) radios, GPS trackers and cellphones.

Saved by the Beacon kicked off at the 2015 Miami International Boat Show. Over the course of the year, the campaign gathered real-life examples of people who have been "Saved by the Beacon" with PSAs, print resources, and a book, which is also available as an e-book. Saved by the Beacon is produced under a grant from the Sports Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The National Safe Boating Council is the foremost coalition for the advancement and promotion of safer boating through education, outreach and training. It represents over 330 U.S. and Canadian organizations committed to reducing boating accidents and enhancing the boating experience. Visit [safeboatingcouncil.org](http://safeboatingcouncil.org) for safe boating resources and campaign materials.

For more information, please visit [savedbythebeacon.com](http://savedbythebeacon.com).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New 'Saved by the Beacon' Resources from the National Safe Boating Council  
Share Importance of Locator Beacons**

*Resources Enhance Boating Safety Survival Education and Awareness*

Manassas, VA (August 29, 2016) – Imagine you're away from the coast, you don't even see land anymore. Even worse, imagine that your boat is now taking on water and you don't have cell phone reception. The National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) has released resources through its Saved by the Beacon campaign for recreational boating safety professionals to educate recreational boaters about the importance of 406 MHz beacons and how to use them correctly in the case of a boating emergency.

“Our hope is to educate the boating public on the importance of having a life saving device, such as an EPIRB or a PLB, because it really can mean the difference between life and death,” said Rachel Johnson, executive director of the NSBC. “These devices are critical to boating safety as they allow search and rescue teams to quickly locate the person in distress through the use of satellites.”

Resources include a book, print, and video public service announcements that highlight the importance of owning and registering a 406 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) for their boat or a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) for their person. The resources are available at [www.SavedbytheBeacon.com](http://www.SavedbytheBeacon.com).

In the video PSAs, Scott Smiles, John Silverwood, and David Hope bravely share testimonials of how they and their loved ones were “Saved by the Beacon.” Each of these men, as well as those around them, faced tragic outcomes, but thanks to the use of their emergency locator beacon, they were safely rescued from their harrowing experiences.

“We are honored to share the incredible survivor stories of those who were ‘Saved by the Beacon,’” continued Johnson.

The NSBC would also like to remind everyone to register his or her emergency locator beacons with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at <http://www.sarsat.noaa.gov/beacon.html>.

The NSBC collaborated with NSBC-member organizations ACR Electronics, Alaska Office of Boating Safety, and Orion Safety Products in the creation of the campaign resources, and would like to acknowledge the various authors who contributed to the Saved by the Beacon book as well as Scott Smiles, John Silverwood, and David Hope for sharing their survivor stories. All of the resources are available at [www.SavedbytheBeacon.com](http://www.SavedbytheBeacon.com).



### **About the National Safe Boating Council**

The National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) is the foremost coalition for the advancement and promotion of safer boating through education, outreach, and training. The NSBC accomplishes this mission by promoting outreach and research initiatives that support boating education and safety awareness; improving the professional development of boating safety educators through training; and developing and recognizing outstanding boating safety programs. To learn more about the NSBC and its programs, visit [www.SafeBoatingCouncil.org](http://www.SafeBoatingCouncil.org).

### **About Saved by the Beacon**

Saved by the Beacon is produced under a grant from the Sports Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard. For more information, please visit [www.savedbythebeacon.com](http://www.savedbythebeacon.com).

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## EPIRB vs. PLB

### EPIRB

An Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon, or EPIRB, is used to alert Search and Rescue forces in the event of an emergency. It does this by transmitting a coded message on the 406 MHz distress frequency via satellite and earth stations to the nearest Rescue Coordination Center, which then notifies local Search and Rescue forces. It may be deployed automatically (Category I) or manually (Category II) deployed, or both (Category I). If your EPIRB transmits GPS coordinates, it can alert Search and Rescue forces of your position in as little as 2-3 minutes.

An EPIRB is for one's boat and registered to the vessel. It should be mounted in an area on the vessel free of overhead obstructions, yet easily accessible (Category I). It may also be carried in a ditch bag, which is a compact floating bag designed to hold items a boater may need in an emergency (Category II).

Boaters often prefer an EPIRB over a PLB (Personal Locator Beacon). EPIRBs, once placed in the water, will operate autonomously by self-activating and floating upright in a transmitting position. Because of their simplicity, it is easy to educate others on board about how they work. They are specifically designed for a worse case scenario of just you and the beacon in the water. Owning a properly installed EPIRB is a sound investment for boaters, as it may save your life and the lives of loved ones during an emergency.

You must register your EPIRB with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at [beaconregistration.noaa.gov](http://beaconregistration.noaa.gov) – it is very easy and only takes a few minutes. If any of your information changes (phone number, address, sold or bought a new boat), you must update your registration. If you sell your boat, instruct the new owner to update the registration as well, or you may be contacted by rescue authorities if it is activated.

### PLB

A Personal Locator Beacon, or PLB, works in the same way as an EPIRB by sending a coded message on the 406 MHz distress frequency via satellite and earth stations to the nearest Rescue Coordination Center, which then notifies local Search and Rescue forces. A PLB is registered to the person, not a vessel, and may be used on land as well as the water. However, PLBs require a little more effort to operate, as they must be manually activated and may need to be held out of the water to function properly even though they are waterproof.

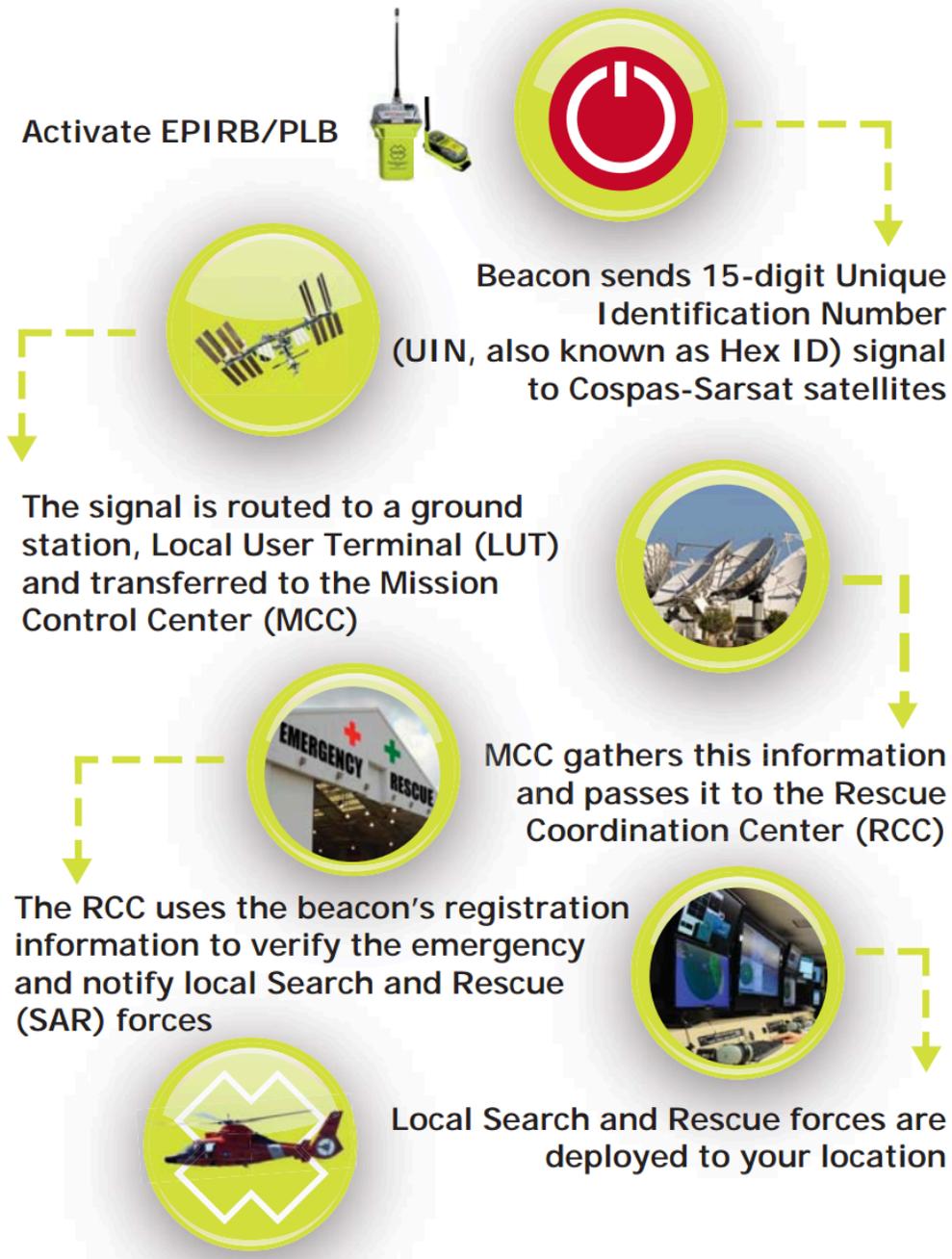
PLBs are small enough to carry on your person so they are well suited for boaters to attach to one's life jacket, a pocket or purse. However, if a PLB is not attached to your life jacket, you may not have it when you need it the most. The National Safe Boating Council believes wearing a life jacket is the simplest life-saving strategy for recreational boaters. Learn more at [safeboatingcampaign.com](http://safeboatingcampaign.com).

You must register your PLB with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at [beaconregistration.noaa.gov](http://beaconregistration.noaa.gov) – it is very easy and takes just a few minutes that might become a lifetime of survival. If any of your information changes (phone number, address, marital status), you must update your registration.



## How a 406 MHz Rescue Works

Source: ACR Electronics Inc., The Science of Survival: A Boater's Guide to EPIRBs, 2012, [acrartex.com](http://acrartex.com)





## Benefits of Emergency Locator Beacons

Some boaters may feel confident they are safe because they have a VHF radio, GPS tracker or cellphone, and not own an EPIRB or PLB. Here is a comparison of emergency local beacons to other common communications devices.

	EPIRB	PLB	VHF-FM (DSC) Radio	GPS Tracker	Cellphone
<b>Flotation</b>	Floats in an upright position to transmit. Performs best while floating.	Not required to float. Floating versions only float so it can be retrieved if dropped in water. Unit needs to be held out of the water or attached high on a life jacket for best transmission.	Not required to float. Floating versions only float so it can be retrieved if dropped in water.	Not required to float.	Not required to float. Will not work if immersed in water.
<b>Transmission Requirements</b>	Minimum of 48 hours at temperatures down to -4°F (-20°C). Longer in nominal temperatures.	Minimum of 24 hours at temperatures down to -4°F (-20°C). Longer in nominal temperatures.	Need a clear line of sight. General rule, the taller & higher an antenna, the better transmission & reception.	GPS must transmit signal to a satellite in the Global Positioning System.	Must be near a mobile phone tower to have a signal to place a phone call.
<b>Activation</b>	Either manually activated in or out of the bracket OR automatically activated when out of its bracket and in the water.	Manually activated.	Manually activated.	Either manually or automatically activated.	Manually activated.
<b>Strobe Light</b>	Required to have a strobe light.	Not required. Some have flashing LED strobes.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required. Some have built-in flashlights.
<b>Mounting Options</b>	Mounted in a bracket (automatic or manual deployment), or carried in a ditch bag.	Worn or carried on a person.	Mounted or hand-held.	Mounted or hand-held.	Worn or carried on a person.
<b>Registration</b>	Registered to the vessel. To register: <a href="http://beaconregistration.noaa.gov">beaconregistration.noaa.gov</a>	Registered to the person, PLBs are legal to be used on land as well as on water. To register: <a href="http://beaconregistration.noaa.gov">beaconregistration.noaa.gov</a>	Registered to the vessel and assigned a 9-digit Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number that identifies your boat. To register: <a href="http://boat.us.com/mmsi/">boat.us.com/mmsi/</a>	Register device on the manufacturer's website.	Registered to the person with the cellular phone company.



## Going Boating? Be Prepared for Anything

By Rachel Johnson, Executive Director, National Safe Boating Council

You've checked everything off your list – life jackets, full tank of gas, cooler with food and snacks – you're ready to enjoy the perfect day on the water with friends. Despite being fully prepared and following navigation rules, another boat slams into the side of your boat. The impact disables both vessels and there are serious injuries for all passengers. You grab your cellphone from your pocket to call for help, but there's no signal, and you're unable to get to the VHF-FM (DSC) radio to call for help. Fortunately, your vessel has a registered Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) with GPS capabilities, and Search and Rescue forces are alerted and arrive within minutes to help.

Each year, more than 500 lives are lost in recreational boating accidents. While it is very important for boaters to understand the importance of boating safety, such as always wearing a life jacket, staying sober and following navigation rules – having an emergency locator 406 MHz beacon on board their boat or on their life jacket can mean the difference between life and death when it's critical for Search and Rescue forces to arrive as soon as possible.

The Saved by the Beacon National Safe Boating Campaign, led by the National Safe Boating Council ([safeboatingcouncil.org](http://safeboatingcouncil.org)), shares the importance of boaters owning an emergency locator (406 MHz) beacon and understanding how to use them correctly in the case of an emergency. An emergency locator beacon is used to alert Search and Rescue forces by transmitting a coded message on the 406 MHz distress frequency via satellite and earth stations to the nearest Rescue Coordination Center.

Boaters often prefer an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRB) over a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB), because it is registered to the vessel, not the person. An EPIRB should be mounted in an area on the vessel free of overhead obstructions, yet easily accessible (Category I). It may also be carried in a ditch bag, which is a compact floating bag designed to hold items a boater may need in an emergency (Category II). An EPIRB is waterproof and may be manually or automatically activated. They are specifically designed for a worse case scenario of just you and the beacon in the water. If your EPIRB has GPS coordinates, it can alert Search and Rescue of your position in as little as 2-3 minutes. Owning a properly installed EPIRB is a sound investment for boaters, as it may save your life and the lives of loved ones during an emergency.

A PLB works in the same way as an EPIRB, but is registered to the person, not a vessel, and may be used on land as well as the water. However, PLBs require a little more effort to operate, as they must be manually activated and held out of the water to function properly. A PLB is small enough for boaters to attach to one's life jacket, however, if it is not attached to your life jacket, you may not have it when you need it the most. The National Safe Boating Council believes wearing a life jacket is a simple life-saving strategy for recreational boaters. Learn more at [safeboatingcampaign.com](http://safeboatingcampaign.com).

Both EPIRBs and PLBs must be registered with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at [beaconregistration.noaa.gov](http://beaconregistration.noaa.gov) – it is very easy and takes just a few minutes that might become a lifetime of survival. If any of your information changes, you must update your registration (phone, address, marital status, sell your boat).



There are hundreds of stories of peoples' lives saved by the use of emergency locator beacons. To learn more, please visit [savedbythebeacon.com](http://savedbythebeacon.com). Before you go boating next, make sure to purchase, register, and have on board your vessel an emergency locator 406 MHz beacon. You never know when it may save your life and the lives of others.

*Rachel Johnson is executive director of the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC), a nationally trusted resource for the advancement and promotion of safer boating through education, outreach and training. Saved by the Beacon is a national campaign led by the NSBC to help recreational boaters understand the importance of emergency locator (406 MHz) beacons and how to use them correctly in the case of a boating emergency. The campaign is produced under a grant from the Sports Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard. For more information, please visit [savedbythebeacon.com](http://savedbythebeacon.com). Follow NSBC at [twitter.com/safeboatcouncil](https://twitter.com/safeboatcouncil) and [facebook.com/nationalsafeboatingcouncil](https://facebook.com/nationalsafeboatingcouncil).*



## General Boating Safety Tips

1. No matter what activity you have planned – boating, fishing, paddling and more – always remember to wear a life jacket every time you are on the water. Accidents on the water can happen much too fast to reach and put on a stowed life jacket.
2. Make sure your life jacket is U.S. Coast Guard approved, appropriate for your water activity, and that it fits properly. A life jacket that is too large or too small can cause different situational problems. All passengers should always wear a life jacket.
3. Know your state's boating laws before you get out on the water. Rules and laws can differ from state to state and violations can result in ticketing, fines or jail time.
4. Take a boating safety course. Learn valuable tips that can help save your life in unexpected situations by taking a NASBLA (National Association of Boating Law Administrators) approved boating safety course.
5. Make sure your boat is as prepared as you are. There are many items that need to be checked and re-checked on any boat. Schedule a Vessel Safety Check with your local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or U.S. Power Squadrons before you hit the water.
6. Boat capacity. Be sure to know your boat's capacity. If you have more on your boat than it was designed to handle, the boat may become unstable and capsize.
7. Check the weather. Know the latest marine weather forecast prior to going out, and keep a regular check for changing conditions.
8. Dress properly. Always dress for the weather, wearing layers if cooler weather, and bring an extra set of clothes in case you get wet.
9. Always file a float plan. File a float plan with someone you trust that includes details about the trip, boat, passengers, towing or trailer vehicle, communication equipment, and emergency contacts. Find out more at [floatplancentral.org](http://floatplancentral.org).
10. Always follow navigation rules. Know the 'Rules of the Road' such as operator's responsibility, maintaining a proper lookout, safe speed, crossing, meeting head-on and overtaking situations. Find out more at [boatoncourse.com](http://boatoncourse.com).
11. Don't drink while you boat. Alcohol use is the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents; it was listed as the leading factor in 17 percent of deaths in 2015. Find out more at [operationdrywater.org](http://operationdrywater.org).
12. Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Gasoline-powered engines on boats, including onboard generators, produce carbon monoxide (CO), a colorless and odorless gas that can poison or kill someone who breathes too much of it. Be sure to install and maintain a working CO detector, never block exhaust outlets, and always dock, beach or anchor at least 20 feet away from the nearest boat that is running a generator or engine.
13. Keep in touch. Communication devices can be the most important piece of emergency equipment on board a vessel, especially in case of emergency. Cell phones, satellite phones, emergency position indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs), VHF radios and personal locator beacons (PLBs) can all contribute in an emergency situation.



## Full-Text PSA Scripts

:60 Radio PSA  
Saved by the Beacon  
National Safe Boating Campaign

No matter if you're boating, fishing, or paddling, be prepared for anything by always wearing your life jacket and having an emergency locator 406 MHz beacon on board your vessel.

Each year, boaters' lives have been 'Saved by the Beacon.' A 406 MHz emergency locator beacon is used to alert Search and Rescue forces in the event of an emergency by transmitting a distress frequency via satellite. And, beacons with GPS can reduce search notification time down from an hour to just a few minutes, getting you help even sooner.

The National Safe Boating Council – a national expert on boating safety – its local partners, and this station remind you to have fun on the water while always being ready for the unexpected. For more information, please visit [savedbythebeacon.com](http://savedbythebeacon.com).

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:30 Radio PSA  
Saved by the Beacon  
National Safe Boating Campaign

Going boating? Be prepared for anything by always wearing your life jacket and having a 406 MHz emergency locator beacon on board your vessel.

Each year, boaters' lives have been 'Saved by the Beacon.' A 406 MHz emergency locator beacon is used to alert Search and Rescue forces in the event of an emergency by transmitting a distress frequency via satellite, getting you the help you need.

The National Safe Boating Council, its local partners, and this station remind you to have fun on the water while always being ready for the unexpected. For more information, visit [savedbythebeacon.com](http://savedbythebeacon.com).

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