

Cold Weather Boating

Boating Tips

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Boating in cold weather or cold water presents unique challenges. Primary is staying warm. Your momma wisely taught layering when going outside in the cold. For comfort as external temperatures increase, you'll need to shed clothing. That holds true as internal temperature rises with increased activity. Layer.

Did you know that we get cold because we sweat? Select light weight clothing specifically manufactured to wick moisture away from the body.

TIP – As a youngster, I had a morning paper route in WV where winters are cold. I learned that spraying my feet with antiperspirant, not deodorant, but antiperspirant kept my feet dry therefore warm.

Ease of movement is important when boating, even during cold weather. Remember movies of bundled up children, arms out straight, waddled rather than walked? Not good on a boat. Layer with thin, tight clothing next to the body then looser clothing. If working around machinery ensure sleeves and cuffs are tight to prevent catching in the machinery.

Second is surviving. Staying warm out of the water is a balance to staying warm in frigid water. Hypothermia can kill a person in a little as 30 minutes. The preferred cotton when water logged offers no insulation plus becomes heavy potentially causing drowning. Opt for natural wool or synthetic fabrics that don't absorb water plus are lighter when wet.

A little thought of solution to warmth in and out of the water is a reasonable weight wet suit under clothing. A wet suit holds heat while providing a fair degree of movement. An alternative, albeit, expensive, is a dry suit. A dry keeps you dry out of the water as well as when submerged in the water. A dry suit requires clothing underneath for warmth.

Additional consideration is dry or rain gear, water repellent outer clothing keeping clothes underneath dry, or as dry as possible. Key considerations are double cuffs, the inner sock cuff and the outer snap cuff, both to keep water out and heat in. Front fasteners are next, inner zipper along with outer snaps. It is important that both work smoothly all the time for convenience as well as safety. Maintain these per manufacturer's instructions. A closed rain suit collar should prevent water entry.

Next is head gear that covers both the front and back of the collar plus shield water from the eyes. Good head gear won't stop water entry but reduces it. Wear a wool toboggan to keep the head and ears warm. Depending on conditions wear a ball cap with a long bill to help keep water off the face and eyes.

Concluding, opt for wool or synthetic fabrics over cotton when boating in cold conditions. Layer for warmth and flexibility. Spray feet with antiperspirant. Opt for the best rain gear you can afford. Stay warm and increase your in water survival chances with the correct clothing.

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