



2008 MVN Water Safety Program

During the last five recreation seasons, we had two water related fatalities on approximately 60,000 acres of Corps lands and waters within the New Orleans District. This season we have increased our boat patrols and emphasize water safety in all contacts we make while near and on the water. Listed below are specific action items for each of the MVN natural resources projects.

Action items to Improve Water Safety

Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System - project consists of approximately 35,000 acres of land and 15,000 acres of water with two boat launches located on Federal property.

- Boat patrols are conducted on throughout each month, especially during holiday weekends when recreational use is high.
- Park rangers are always on the lookout for unsafe acts and address safety concerns while on the water.
- Water safety messages are posted on bulletin boards.
- Water safety messages are distributed throughout the year; not just during the recreation season because of the large number of hunters using boats to access lands.
- Booths are staffed at boat shows, sportsman's shows and the Outdoor Expo to emphasize water safety (PFD's and hypothermia) to boaters, hunters, and fishers.
- Project purchases additional \$12,000 per year of trinkets (cups, yo-yos, beach balls, huggies, etc.) with a water safety messages embossed on them for distribution at events.
- Water safety educational programs emphasize the importance of learning to swim with young children and their parents.
- Project averages 200 contacts per month that emphasizing water safety.

Bonnet Carré Spillway - project consists of approximately 6,000 acres of land and 1,600 acres of water with five boat launches on Federal property.

- Boating patrols are conducted by park rangers for one weekend each month. Contract law enforcement Sheriff's patrol conducts marine patrols for three weekends each month during the summer recreation season.
- Boat safety checks are conducted regularly at boat launches. Checks include exceeded horsepower ratings, easy access to PFD's, and boat safety equipment, including paddles and fire extinguishers.
- Water safety posters are displayed at all information boards.

- Water safety items are distributed to the public at spillway openings when monthly visitation may exceed 50,000.
- Ranger patrols are increased during the spillway openings by adding additional ranger staff to supplement current staff of 3 rangers.
- Water safety items are also distributed at public events including the Louisiana Sportsman's Show, Wetland Watchers, and Lock Fest.
- Water safety education programs focus on children where the importance of wearing life jackets often rubs off on parents. Life jacket relay races teach children the correct way of putting on a life jacket.

Old River Control - project consists of approximately 2,500 acres of land and 500 acres of water with three boat launches on Federal property.

- Located on the Atchafalaya and Mississippi Rivers, water safety emphasis is on visitors who bank fish and commercially bait and net fish.
- The importance of wearing a life jacket is emphasized with every contact made at boat launches.
- Boat patrols are conducted on the Mississippi River during water control structure openings to prevent boaters from entering the inflow channels.
- Water safety messages are displayed at information boards.
- In partnership with the adjacent landowner, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, information on fisheries, wildlife, and water safety is distributed to the public.
- Water safety programs are conducted for visiting children and their parents. Corps provided water safety promotions materials are distributed, including Frisbees, coloring books, posters, and other items with water safety messages.

Port Allen Lock - project consists of approximately 45 acres of Federal land and water with one boat launch and two tailbay bank fishing areas.

- Lock personnel emphasize the importance of wearing a life jacket with every contact made at the boat launch.
- Water safety messages are displayed at information boards.
- Water safety programs are conducted during lock tours and during annual events such as Lock Fest.