



MarineLab

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER
Marine Resources Development Foundation

MARINELAB PROGRAMS: WE PUT SAFETY FIRST!

MarineLab has a strong safety component in our marine education programs. We've been operating since 1985, and are justifiably proud of our stellar safety record. Most of our schools have been coming for a decade or more; we have over a 90% repeat rate. We serve between 4,000 and 5,000 students per year. Every teacher is asked to complete an evaluation form, which asks them to rate all aspects of our program, including safety. We consistently receive an average of 4.9 (on a scale of 1 to 5) on our boat safety aspect.

STAFF

ALL Boat Captains and Crew:

- Participate in sexual harassment and child abuse prevention training
- Complete Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary safe boater course and Everglades safe boater course
- Hold current CPR/AED certifications
- Complete DOT Drug Abuse Prevention training annually
- Drug test upon hire and are enrolled in a random drug testing program
- Are hired with on water experience in addition to thorough on the job training
- Undergo a complete background check, including a Level 2 screening and fingerprinting upon hire

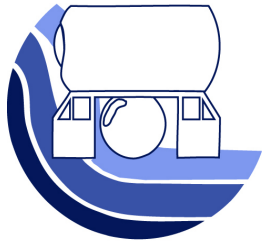
Our marine science instructors act as mates on our boats. All mates are Red Cross certified lifeguards and participate in regular lifeguard skills checks as part of their job throughout the year.

All MarineLab Captains have a minimum of a USCG 25 Ton Masters Captains License and a Marine Radio Operator Permit.

Per US Coast Guard requirements, staff practice monthly boat safety drills.

BOATS

The boats used by the MarineLab program are all Inspected Small Passenger Vessels and are manned in accordance with US Coast Guard requirements. Per inspected vessel requirements, all boat safety equipment is checked monthly.



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We own six boats, which are captained and crewed by our staff, and we also use a local dive charter company. Their captains and crew are subject to the same background screening and certification requirements as our staff.

WATER SAFETY

As their very first water activity at MarineLab, our students participate in a swim test. This allows the instructors to see and assess each students' comfort level in the water, and provide additional attention if necessary. Students who are anxious, unsure or weak swimmers are provided with ski vests for flotation. All students are equipped with inflatable snorkel vests that they may inflate as much or as little as they desire. These vests are brightly colored to aid visual tracking of the snorkelers. Students are paired with 'buddies' and this system is rigorously enforced throughout the program.

An introduction to proper snorkeling techniques is also part of every MarineLab program. We pride ourselves on providing specialized attention to new snorkelers or non-swimmers, and many students who started out afraid to put their faces in the water leave MarineLab with new confidence and enjoyment in the marine environment.

Students are oriented to each snorkeling site before entering the water, and instructed to stay within 100 feet of the boats and the dive flag at all times.

The Captain stays on board to survey snorkelers from the boat while the instructor gets in the water with the students, providing closer safety supervision while also guiding the students around the habitat and pointing out interesting organisms and plants.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If a school or school board wishes additional liability protection, they can be added to MarineLab's liability insurance policy as an additional insured, for the program time period only, at no additional cost. Please email Anne Hill at coordinator@marinelab.org with the school or school board name, address, and fax number or email address, and a certificate will be sent to you directly from our insurance agent's office.

References from other schools and teachers are available upon request.