**National Boating Federation**

FEBRUARY LEGISLATIVE REPORT
by Earl Waesche
Legislative Director
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U.S. Court denies appeal on E15:
An appeal by a coalition of marine industry groups was denied by the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. Last August the court dismissed a challenge by the same plaintiffs, including the National Marine Mfrs Assoc, to allow E15 ethanol into the fuel supply. E15 has only been approved for 2001 cars and above but not for marine engines. This will also cause confusion at fuel pumps as many consumers may not even be aware of problems caused by ethanol and select E15 instead of E10. As I wrote in CHATTER last month the AAA said the marine retailers and the EPA should halt the sale of E15.

It appears at this time that the EPA and Growth Energy, which represents the corn industry, will win. The only alternative that I know of is ValvTect, a marine fuel that can be purchased at fuel stations in Virginia. Unfortunately Maryland does not allow ValvTect fuel at marine facilities. But it can be purchased by the bottle and put in before fueling.
National Recreational Boating Safety Coalition: I attended the NRBSC meeting earlier this month in DC. Present were representatives from the US Power Squadrons, NTSB, USCG, NASBLA, BoatUS and Safe Kids. Areas discussed were the Federal budget cuts, highlights of various boating safety issues and ongoing legislative activity in certain states. Of particular interest was the report given by W. Vann Burgess of the USCG. He reported that the Coast Guard budget has taken a hit and that there is a good chance of further reductions in 2014. Among other things, this will affect the number of events and people that can attend. Further, they are working on the reauthorization of the Wallop/Breaux Trust Fund. Important changes include an increase in funding for Boating Safety Advisory Council to $200K per year and increasing the allocation for non-profit grants to 7%. He also reported that the USCG Boating Survey for 2011 is soon to be released.

Charlie Sledd of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators reported that Virginia has again entered a bill (1597) to require life jacket wear for children 12 and under. Efforts to require mandatory PFD wear for children in Virginia have been ongoing since the mid 90s without success. Currently only two states (Virginia and Wisconsin) have no state child PFD wear and age requirement. Sponsors of the bill are Delegates Cox and Ward. Anyone who can provide support in passing this important legislation is encouraged to do so.