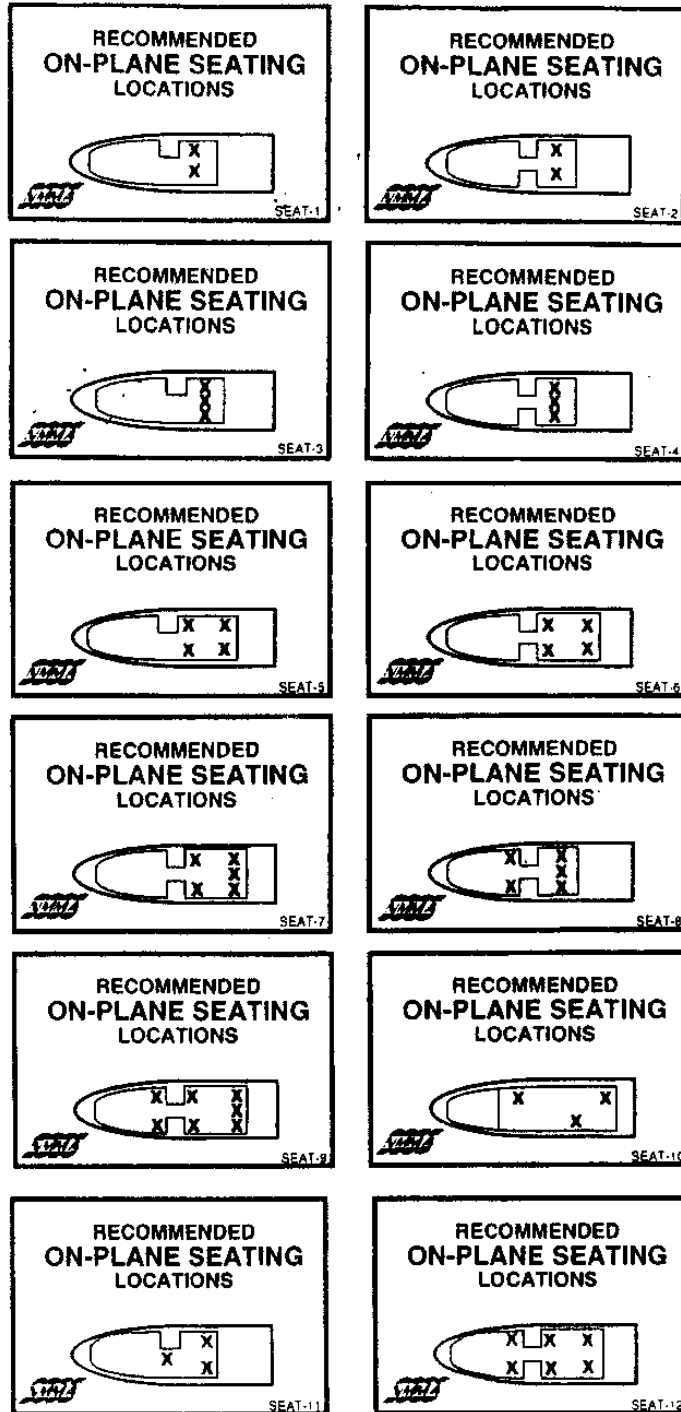


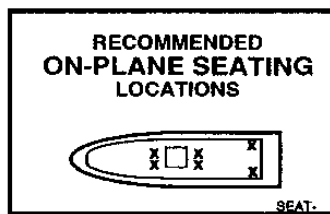
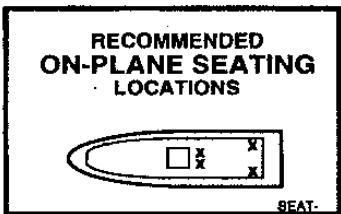
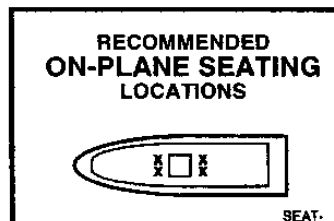
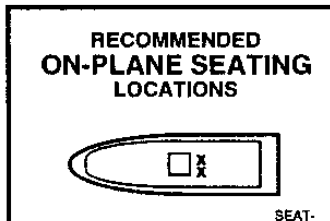
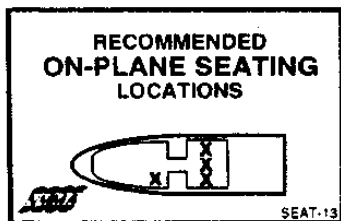
ABYC OCCUPANT PROTECTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS DESIGNATING ON-PLANE SEATING LOCATIONS

The law in recent years has tended to place full responsibility for injuries caused by defective products upon the product manufacturer. This is because the manufacturer can design, build and market products in ways that will reduce if not eliminate most unreasonable and unnecessary hazards. In the absence of applicable Federal standards, the best way to assure the safety of purchasers of products you manufacture is to build them in compliance with recognized voluntary industry standards and recommended practices.

From the day it was founded in 1954, the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) has been the most broadly based of the standards writing organizations in the recreational boating field in the United States. The majority of ABYC members are associated with the boat manufacturing field in some capacity; however, there are also members from other standards writing organizations, the Coast Guard, Underwriters Laboratories, marine surveyors and insurance companies.

The ABYC Occupant Protection Committee recently proposed that seats in certain boats should be designed for use when the boat is on plane. This group of engineers, marine surveyors and law enforcement persons has proposed that a new label be placed in boats, which pictures the location of designated seating positions. The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) is supplying the decals to manufacturers who want to begin labeling their boats. Major bass boat manufacturers, including Astro/Procraft, Ranger, Skeeter, Stratos and Tracker, have begun to use the first draft of these labels. More than 50,000 decals have already been distributed.





The ABYC Occupant Protection Committee is encouraging manufacturers to consider the appropriateness of the designated seating position labels in other boat models.

Boat operators often fail to follow safe operating basics, such as sitting in designated seats when the craft is on plane, maintaining a balanced load or allowing an unobstructed view for the driver. It's particularly true of fishermen who like to keep an elevated lookout and use pedestal seats while underway, or keep a line in the water even above trolling speed.

The ABYC committee wants to encourage people to sit in designated seats to reduce the possibility that they might fall or be injured when the boat is traveling at planing speeds. Many boats have casting platforms, storage lockers and other surfaces which are inappropriate for seating when the boat is on plane.

The committee also wants to discourage people from sitting on seat backs and gunwales because of the potential for falls overboard during high speed turns, jumping wakes, and other violent maneuvers.

The "Recommended On-Plane Seating Locations" decals provide an illustration of the boat's interior layout with an "x" to mark where occupants should sit when the craft is on plane. The samples illustrated show the various seating configurations which are currently available for seating capacities of two to seven persons. Custom orders for other configurations are available at an additional cost (call the National Marine Manufacturers Association for an estimate) and in minimum quantities of 1000 decals.

The decals can be placed near the helm or adjacent to the capacity plate. The 2-by 3-inch self-adhesive

decals are made of white vinyl printed black with a mylar overlay to protect from weather, chemicals and gasoline spills.

The ABYC Occupant Protection Committee is continuing to study means to reduce the possibility of persons being injured while boating. In addition to these designated seating labels, the committee is also considering:

- (1) handholds for passengers reboarding from the water;
- (2) rounding or padding sharp corners; and
- (3) ways to reduce tripping, slipping or pinching hazards.

For further information about labels, contact:

Publications Department
National Marine Manufacturers
Association (NMMA)
401 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
Tel: (312) 836-4747.

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