

Media Release
16 January 2012

Coastguard Wanganui Lights the Way at Annual Fishing Competition

Coastguard Wanganui is 'lighting the way' to help save lives at sea by giving away 380 Cyalume (glow) sticks at the annual Wanganui-Manawatu Sea Fishing Club competition, held from 21-23 January.

During the weigh-in times on each of the three days of competition, Coastguard volunteers will be attaching the glow sticks to boaties' life jackets as part of the 'Lighting the Way – Save a life' project.

Kevin McKenna, Coastguard Wanganui President says a number of fatalities at sea over the past few years may have been prevented if boaties had had a glow stick to assist the search and rescue agencies attempting to locate them.

"Coastguard Wanganui is pleased to have the opportunity to educate fishing competition participants about boat safety while also giving them the tools to help themselves attract help should they ever find themselves in trouble.

"Even if one life is saved as a result of our efforts through the distribution of the Cyalume sticks, we have made a difference."

A DVD will be playing during the competition to demonstrate how, with the simple use of a Cyalume stick, people can be seen from a greater distance particularly in the dark when using Night Vision Goggles.

Mike Carson, organiser of the 'Lighting the Way – Save a Life' project, explains that when things take a turn for the worst at sea, it can go downhill very quickly leaving you with little to no time to make a Mayday call or grab the items that may help you while in the water.

"Attaching the Cyalume glow sticks to your life jackets ensures that you will have it with you when you need it most."

For more tips on what you can do to keep safe at sea visit www.coastguard.co.nz

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About Coastguard New Zealand:

Coastguard is the charity that provides New Zealand's primary maritime search and rescue service. The organisation operates from a network of four regions and 71 affiliated units, located around the coastline and

major lakes of New Zealand. Coastguard New Zealand is a volunteer organisation with a charitable status. It has more than 18,000 supporter members and 2,224 active Professional Volunteers who provide around 350,000 hours of their time each year to educate, protect and help save lives at sea. Coastguard performs over 3,000 rescues each year assisting almost 7,000 New Zealanders. There are currently 72 dedicated rescue vessels in Coastguard New Zealand's fleet, 10 air patrol units and one dedicated communications unit. All crew members on board Coastguard vessels and air patrol craft are trained search and rescue personnel working to enhance the safety of all New Zealanders when they participate in boating and water activities.