

AN ACT

relating to the use of emergency engine cutoff switches on motorboats; creating a criminal offense.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 31, Parks and Wildlife Code, is amended by adding Section 31.1071 to read as follows:

Sec. 31.1071. OPERATION OF MOTORBOAT WITH EMERGENCY ENGINE CUTOFF SWITCH. (a) In this section, "engine cutoff switch" means an emergency switch installed on a motorboat that:

(1) is designed to shut off the engine if:

(A) the motorboat operator using a lanyard attachment activates the switch by falling overboard or otherwise moving beyond the length of the lanyard; or

(B) the motorboat operator or a passenger using a wireless attachment activates the switch by falling overboard and submerging a man-overboard transmitter; and

(2) attaches:

(A) physically to the motorboat operator through the use of a lanyard worn by the operator; or

(B) wirelessly through the use of a water-activated man-overboard transmitter worn by the motorboat operator or any similarly equipped passenger on the motorboat.

(b) A motorboat operator may not operate a motorboat less than 26 feet in length and equipped by the manufacturer with an

1 engine cutoff switch while the motorboat is under way and moving at
2 greater than headway speed without first verifying that the switch
3 is operational and fully functional and properly attaching the
4 lanyard or wireless attachment, as appropriate for the specific
5 motorboat, to the operator's body or to the clothing or personal
6 flotation device being worn by the operator.

7 SECTION 2. Section 31.127, Parks and Wildlife Code, is
8 amended by adding Subsection (g) to read as follows:

9 (g) A person who operates a motorboat in violation of
10 Section 31.1071 commits an offense punishable by a fine of not more
11 than \$200.

12 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 337 was passed by the House on March 26, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 115, Nays 31, 1 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 337 on May 22, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 115, Nays 26, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 337 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 14, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 25, Nays 6.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor