

“Build it just like this one.” – US Coast Guard, referring to Maine Duck Tours duck boat.

Our hearts go out to all those affected during the 2018 Branson, Missouri duck boat tragedy. We respect our guests concerns, but wish to educate consumers on the *extensive* differences in hull and operations between Maine Duck Tours and WWII era DUKWs involved in tragedies over the years, as federally approved by the United States Coast Guard.

WEATHER

In the event of unsafe weather conditions, Maine Duck Tours does not hesitate to cancel and refund tours, and in addition to our Operations Management staff, our experienced US Coast Guard Master Captains reserve this right at any time. In the event Maine Duck Tours cancels for any reason, we do provide rebooking options or full refund on the day of the tour.

VESSEL CONSTRUCTION

Maine Duck Tours made the conscious decision to put safety first back in 2004 in hiring a naval architect to build our amphibious vehicle/vessel specifically for tourism. Very different from the WWII-era DUKW boats that have been involved in tragic accidents, Bufflehead has a watertight, flush deck hull, as opposed to the open hulls of the DUKWs prone to flooding. At our annual 2018 USCG hull inspection our experienced inspector highlighted the features our amphibious vehicle/vessel possesses over others in operation, stating, “if you purchase another one, build it just like this one.”

SAFETY PROCEDURES

Maine Duck Tour’s strict safety procedures and operational parameters prohibits Bufflehead from getting underway in dangerous weather. In the case of emergency, meeting all federal US Coast Guard regulations, Bufflehead is equipped with more than enough overhead personal floatation devices for each passenger, immediately accessible overhead, and our Captain’s hold a US Coast Guard 25 ton (or more) Master’s Captains license (at least 720 days at sea and extensive coursework), trained for making emergency decisions. In comparison, amphibious “duck boat” operators on fresh water are only required to carry a USCG Limited Masters “launch” License (minimum 120 days with like vessels and a weekend course).

Since the Branson tragedy, Maine Duck Tours has completed a safety stand down and comprehensive review of all of our safety procedures, met with our local USCG Captain of Port and Inspectors to assure proactive procedures are in place. We will continue to work with our member associations to learn from any lessons gleaned from the investigation into this accident. Finally, we will continue to strive as a company to provide the most safe and enjoyable tours in the amphibious tour vessel industry.

We thank you for choosing us as your Portland Land and Sea Adventure and look forward to hosting you!

Regards,
Kris McClure
President