



## National Motor Lifeboat School

**Active Duty Personnel:** 38  
**Reserve Personnel:** 0  
**Civilian Personnel:** 0

**Mailing Address**  
Commander  
USCG NMLBS  
P.O. Box 460  
Ilwaco, WA 98624  
(360) 642-2384

For more information on the Coast Guard visit the Internet at <http://www.uscg.mil>. For recruiting information call 1-877-NOW-USCG.

**Established:** The National Motor Lifeboat School was established in 1968 at Station Cape Disappointment, in Ilwaco, Wash., at the mouth of the Columbia River. The first classes were little more than meetings of surfmen who were stationed along the Washington and Oregon coasts. As classes progressed, a curriculum was developed, and instructors were permanently assigned. In 1980, the name National Motor Lifeboat School was adopted and it was made a national training center.

**What we do:** The NMLBS is the only school for rough weather surf rescue operations in the country. The Columbia River bar, known as the "Graveyard of the Pacific," provides an ideal rough weather training environment with its deep river channel, rock jetties, coastal surf zones, and waves that can often exceed 20 feet.

Up to 150 students attend courses at the NMLBS every year. In addition to U.S. Coast Guard students, the Canadian Coast Guard, the Royal National Lifeboat Institute, Norway, and other countries have sent students through the course. Of the five classes available, the Heavy Weather Coxswain Course is the "meat and potatoes of the school." The course

provides students with the specific skills needed to operate the motor lifeboat in the rough weather environment for which it was designed. The course stresses rough weather towing, surf operations, motor lifeboat handling, and risk management. The [47-footer](#) is the current MLB in use at the school taking the place of the [44-footer](#) in 1996. The NMLBS also operates the Motor Lifeboat Standardization Team, which visits all of the MLB stations, conducting a detailed inspection and boat drills.

**Accomplished Operations:** The NMLBS operates year-round, supplying Coast Guard, men and women, with courses from MLB Basic Coxswain to Heavy Weather Coxswain to Operations Supervisor.



USCG FILE PHOTO High resolution copy can be found at: <http://www.uscg.mil/images.html>