

RCW 79A.60.200 Duty of operator involved in collision, accident, or other casualty—Immunity from liability of persons rendering assistance—Penalties.

(1) The operator of a vessel involved in a collision, accident, or other casualty, to the extent the operator can do so without serious danger to the operator's own vessel or persons aboard, shall render all practical and necessary assistance to persons affected by the collision, accident, or casualty to save them from danger caused by the incident. Under no circumstances may the rendering of assistance or other compliance with this section be evidence of the liability of such operator for the collision, accident, or casualty. The operator shall also give all pertinent accident information, as specified by rule by the commission, to the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction: PROVIDED, That this requirement shall not apply to operators of vessels when they are participating in an organized competitive event authorized or otherwise permitted by the appropriate agency having jurisdiction and authority to authorize such events. These duties are in addition to any duties otherwise imposed by law. Except as provided for in RCW 79A.60.020 and subsection (3) of this section, a violation of this subsection is a civil infraction punishable under RCW 7.84.100.

(2) Any person who complies with subsection (1) of this section or who gratuitously and in good faith renders assistance at the scene of a vessel collision, accident, or other casualty, without objection of the person assisted, shall not be held liable for any civil damages as a result of the rendering of assistance or for any act or omission in providing or arranging salvage, towage, medical treatment, or other assistance, where the assisting person acts as any reasonably prudent person would have acted under the same or similar circumstances.

(3) An operator of a vessel is guilty of a class C felony and is punishable pursuant to RCW 9A.20.021 if the operator: (a) Is involved in a collision that results in injury to a person; (b) knew or reasonably should have known that a person was injured in the collision; and (c) leaves the scene of the collision without rendering all practical and necessary assistance to the injured person as required pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, under circumstances in which the operator could have rendered assistance without serious danger to the operator's own vessel or persons aboard. This subsection (3) does not apply to vessels involved in commerce, including but not limited to tugs, barges, cargo vessels, commercial passenger vessels, fishing vessels, and processing vessels. [2000 c 11 s 102; 1996 c 36 s 1; 1993 c 244 s 18; 1984 c 183 s 1; 1983 2nd ex.s. c 3 s 48. Formerly RCW 88.12.155, 88.12.130, and 88.02.080.]

Intent—1993 c 244: See note following RCW 79A.60.010.