**Fact Sheet**

**OPERATION DRY WATER  
July 3 - 5, 2020**

***About Operation Dry Water:***

* The 2020 Operation Dry Water heightened awareness and enforcement weekend is taking place July 3 - 5, 2020.
* Operation Dry Water is a national awareness and enforcement campaign focused on reducing the number of alcohol and drug related accidents and fatalities and fostering a stronger, more visible deterrent to alcohol and drug use on the water.
* Operation Dry Water is coordinated by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard as well as local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.
* Officers in all 56 U.S. states, trusts and territories from local, state and federal agencies are expected to participate July 3 - 5 in the 2020 Operation Dry Water heightened awareness and enforcement weekend.
* Launched in 2009 by NASBLA in partnership with the United States Coast Guard, Operation Dry Water has been a highly successful campaign, drawing public attention to the dangers of boating under the influence (BUI) of alcohol and drugs.
* Since the inception of the Operation Dry Water Campaign in 2009, law enforcement officers have removed 4,095 BUI operators from the nation’s waterways and made contact with over 1.5 million boaters during the annual three-day weekend. The campaign continues to make a significant impact on boater safety and spreading the message of the danger of boating under the influence.
* Operation Dry Water weekend is held annually near the Fourth of July holiday. A holiday known for increased boaters on the waters, where alcohol use is prevalent as are subsequent boating accidents and fatalities.
* The Operation Dry Water outreach and awareness portion of the campaign is in effect year-round. Through the outreach efforts of NASBLA, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the participating law enforcement agencies nationwide, Operation Dry Water focuses on spreading awareness of the danger of boating under the influence as well as changing the cultural acceptance of drinking and boating and boating impaired.

***Operation Dry Water 2019***

* In 2019, 736 local, state, and federal agencies participated in Operation Dry Water. Over the three-day heightened awareness and enforcement weekend law enforcement officers contacted 271,286 boaters, made 563 BUI arrests, and issued 34,976 citations and warnings for safety violations.
* In 2019, over 7,500 officers from 736 local, state, and federal agencies participated in the 72 hours of heightened BUI enforcement.
* [Insert State/ Agency 2019 ODW event data, i.e. number of BUI arrests, BUI citations issued, number of other safety violations, boater/vessel contacts.]

***About BUI:***

* [Insert any new or enhanced BUI laws in your state.]
* U.S. Coast Guard 2018 data reveal that alcohol use remains the primary contributing factor recreational boater deaths.1
* [Insert percentage of state recreational boating injuries/fatalities where BUI of alcohol or drug use was a primary contributing factor.]
* Operating a boat with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 or higher is against federal law and most state laws. [Insert your State BAC limit]
* Alcohol can impair a boater’s judgment, balance, vision, and reaction time. It can also increase fatigue and susceptibility to the effects of cold-water immersion.
* Sun, wind, noise, vibration, and motion – “stressors” common to the boating environment – intensify the side effects of alcohol, drugs, and some medications.
* Impairment can be even more dangerous for boaters than for drivers in a car, since most boaters have less experience and confidence operating a boat than they do driving a car.
* Persons found to be boating under the influence can expect to incur severe penalties. If a boat operator is BUI, the voyage may be terminated, the boat may be impounded and the operator may be arrested. Penalties vary by state but can include fines, jail, loss of boating privileges, even loss of driving privileges.
* A three-year field evaluation by the Southern California Research Institute completed in 2011 validated a battery of tests for marine use that are now the basis for efforts to implement a National Marine Field Sobriety Test standard.
* Combined with chemical tests using blood, breath, and urine samples, these validated ashore and afloat tests give marine law enforcement officers an impressive arsenal in their ongoing efforts to enforce BUI laws.
* Alcohol is also dangerous for passengers. Intoxication can lead to slips, falls overboard and other dangerous accidents.
* It is illegal in every state and territory to operate a boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. BUI laws pertain to all vessels, from canoes and rowboats to the largest ships.

***Other Boating Safety Facts:***

* 84% of people who drowned in a recreational boating accident were not wearing a life jacket. 2 Always wear a life jacket!
* Boat operator instruction is a significant factor in avoiding and surviving accidents. In accidents where the operator’s instruction was known, 74% of fatalities occurred on boats where the operator had not received any boating safety instruction.3
* In 2018, there were 11,852,969 recreational vessels registered in the United States.4
* [Insert the number of registered vessels in your state.]

(1- 4) Source: U.S. Coast Guard *Recreational Boating Statistics 2018*