



## NATIONAL BOATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE AWARENESS & ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGN

OPERATION  
DRY WATER



### Talking Points OPERATION DRY WATER July 3 – 5, 2026

Boating under the influence continues to be a major factor in incidents and fatalities on our nation's waterways. Organizations and outreach partners are teaming up for **Operation Dry Water**, a national campaign aimed at raising awareness of and enforcing laws against boating under the influence.

The 2026 Operation Dry Water heightened awareness and enforcement three-day weekend is scheduled for July 3-5, coinciding with the Fourth of July—a holiday known for impaired boating and deadly incidents.

- **[Organization name]**, **[other partners]**, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), and the U.S. Coast Guard are joining forces in an intensified effort to educate boaters about boating under the influence and safe boating practices.
- Operation Dry Water is a year-round boating under the influence awareness campaign.
- Organizations and law enforcement agencies from all 56 U.S. states and territories participate in Operation Dry Water's heightened awareness and enforcement weekend.
- Launched in 2009 by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in partnership with the United States Coast Guard, Operation Dry Water has been a highly successful effort to increase public awareness of the dangers of boating under the influence (BUI) of alcohol and drugs.
- Alcohol is the leading contributing factor in recreational boating fatalities and a significant cause of on-the-water incidents.<sup>1</sup>
- BUI is illegal. Operating a recreational vessel with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of **[state BAC limit]** or higher is against **[state]** law.
- Boating under the influence applies to both drugs and alcohol. Even some prescription medications can make operating a recreational vessel difficult and unsafe. It is important to check with your doctor about the potential side effects of any medications you might be taking.
- 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—common stressors in the boating environment—can intensify the side effects of alcohol, drugs, and some medications.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: U.S. Coast Guard *Recreational Boating Statistics 2024*



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- Alcohol use is dangerous for operators and passengers alike. Intoxicated passengers can easily slip, fall overboard or suffer other life-threatening incidents.
- Alcohol use by passengers presents a danger regardless of the activity of the operator.<sup>2</sup>
- If you boat under the influence of drugs or alcohol, you are endangering your life and the lives of others.
- No matter what term is used, if a person is feeling high, buzzed, stoned, drunk or wasted, he or she is impaired and should not be out on the water.
- It is crucial that all operators and passengers wear a USCG-approved life jacket. Additionally, operators should utilize an engine cut-off switch, which kills the engine if the operator is removed from the helm.
- The mission of Operation Dry Water is to reduce the number of alcohol- and drug-related incidents and fatalities through increased recreational boater awareness and by fostering a stronger and more visible deterrent to alcohol use on the water.

For more information, boaters can access [operationdrywater.org](http://operationdrywater.org), [nasbla.org](http://nasbla.org), [uscgboating.org](http://uscgboating.org) or [\[agency website\]](#).

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<sup>2</sup> Source: NASBLA *Boating Under the Influence (BUI) Report*