



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 30, 2021

Safety a main focus this Fourth of July holiday weekend

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DES MOINES – State and local law enforcement agencies will be focusing safety this Fourth of July holiday weekend as thousands are expected to travel across the state and recreate on Iowa's natural resources.

The Iowa DNR Law Enforcement Bureau will be focusing efforts on the boating while intoxicated law as part of the national Operation Dry Water campaign to draw public attention to the hazards of boating under the influence.

Iowa DNR Conservation Officers will be heavily patrolling Iowa waterways over the Fourth of July holiday and during the Operation Dry Water campaign, July 2 – 4. The DNR will be conducting heightened awareness and enforcement of boating under the influence laws in hopes to decrease the number of crashes, causing injuries and deaths and remove any impaired boat operators, providing a safe and enjoyable experience for boaters this season.

“Often times, people don't realize the warm temperatures and sun, along with the wind and waves, can cause the effects of alcohol to be intensified much quicker,” said Susan Stocker, boating law administrator and education coordinator for the Iowa DNR.

“Operators may not think they are over the limit, but their judgment, reaction time, balance and vision show otherwise.”

Tips to staying safe while boating on the water this summer:

- **Boat sober.** Alcohol and drug use impairs a boater's judgment, balance, vision and reaction time.
- **Wear your life jacket and have the proper amount onboard.**
- **Take a boating safety education course.**
- **Know the current boating laws for the State of Iowa**

Operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol or drugs is illegal on all navigable waters of the state and can lead to serious injuries and consequences.

In Iowa, it is illegal to operate a vessel or vehicle with a BAC level of .08 or higher. If you are found to be impaired and operating a boat or vehicle, you will face the consequences

from law enforcement.

The public beaches across the state are also expected to be busy this Fourth of July holiday weekend and the DNR reminds swimmers to follow these safety guidelines:

- **Swim in designated areas—the roped off areas**
- **Wear a lifejacket**
- **Always swim with a buddy or let someone know where you are at all times**
- **Avoid areas with waves or rip currents**

The DNR wishes everyone a safe and enjoyable Fourth of July holiday.

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