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STATE OF ALASKA



Department of  
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PRESS RELEASE

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## Troopers Boost Presence on Waterways as Part of National Boating Safety Drive

*The annual Operation Dry Water campaign runs July 4 -7.*

**July 1, 2019 (ANCHORAGE)** – Don't boat buzzed. That's a safety message Alaska State Troopers want to make clear as brown shirts, blue shirts, and the U.S. Coast Guard team up July 4 – 7 to increase their presence on popular lakes and waterways around the state. The heightened patrols are part of Operation Dry Water, a national campaign to enhance recreational boating safety and prevent boating-related injuries or deaths.

"It's our job to keep Alaskans safe," said Alaska Wildlife Troopers Captain Rex Leath, "so we're going to be out there delivering our safety message and keeping a sharp lookout for people operating boats while impaired."

Alaska's laws prohibiting the operation of boats while intoxicated – along with associated penalties, including stiff fines and mandatory jail time – are the same as those governing driving while impaired.

In addition to discouraging people from drinking or partaking of other mind-altering substances while operating boats, patrols will also be keeping an eye out for required safety equipment.

"Boaters need to make sure they're familiar with Alaska's boating safety requirements," Leath said. "We're going to be contacting boaters and looking for life jackets and other safety equipment like flares and throw-able floatation devices."

Historically, nine out of 10 drowning deaths in Alaska have involved people not wearing lifejackets, according to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Office of Boating Safety. While all Alaskans are encouraged to wear life jackets while on the water, persons younger than age 13 are required by law to wear lifejackets when in an open boat or on an open deck.

To learn more about state boating safety and rules, visit <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/boating/>

For more information about Operation Dry Water, contact Captain Rex Leath at [rex.leath@alaska.gov](mailto:rex.leath@alaska.gov) or (907) 334-2502.

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