



# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# NEWS RELEASE



Visit us on Facebook, Twitter & YouTube

or at

[www.gadnrle.org](http://www.gadnrle.org)

## LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Law Enforcement *Off The Pavement*

Contact:

Mark McKinnon, Public Affairs Officer

Office: (706) 557-3106 Cell: (404) 387-7780

[mark.mckinnon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:mark.mckinnon@dnr.ga.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 17, 2018

*Anyone who donates a life jacket at the show gets \$3 off admission*

## **SPLASH Water Safety Campaign Teams Up with Atlanta Boat Show for Life Jacket Initiative**

SOCIAL CIRCLE – Georgia may be cold and even snowy this week but at the Georgia World Congress Center on Thursday, thoughts will only be on warm Summer days, boating, waterskiing, fishing, and a number of other recreational activities on the state's waterways. The [2018 Progressive@ Insurance Atlanta Boat Show](#) is dropping anchor at the Congress Center Jan. 18-21, bringing the best in boating to downtown Atlanta for four days. Now in its 56<sup>th</sup> year, the Atlanta Boat Show has teamed up with the SPLASH Water Safety Campaign to promote safety and fun on the water.

When Show attendees bring in a new or gently used U.S. Coast Guard approved life vest, they'll get \$3 off Show admission. [SPLASH](#) was revitalized in March of 2017, when the GA DNR Law Enforcement Division began a partnership with First Lady Sandra Deal and a number of federal, state and private partners in the water safety initiative, with the goal of reducing all water-related deaths in Georgia. In less than a year, the campaign has stenciled over 200 boat ramps with a safety message; identified locations statewide for the placement of life jacket loaner boards; developed printed materials, a web site, Facebook page, and an Information & Education program for use by schools and other organizations. The campaign's current focus is to secure donations for building materials and life jackets for the loaner boards.

The life jackets donated at the Atlanta Boat Show this weekend will be inspected by Georgia Game Wardens. If they are in serviceable condition, they will be placed on 250 life jacket loaner boards that SPLASH has planned to install across the state. The boards will be placed at boat ramps and swimming areas, allowing boaters and swimmers, who may have forgotten their life vests, to borrow one for the day, free of charge.

Plans are to continue the SPLASH initiative indefinitely. The acronym highlights positive actions for water safety.

Supervision - always watch children.

Prevention – properly secure swimming areas and make safety equipment easily accessible.

Life jackets – wear them.

Arms-length - keep small children close.

Swim lessons – take them.

Have a water safety plan.

In the summer of 2017, there were 53 drownings and five boating incident fatalities in Georgia. DNR Law Enforcement and all of the SPLASH partners encourage everyone to help in reducing those numbers by donating a life jacket.

Visit <http://gadnrle.org/wear-it> for more on the SPLASH Water Safety Campaign.

###