



GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE

RELEASE:

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GA DNR Game Wardens to Participate in *Operation Dry Water* this Weekend to Stop Boating Under the Influence

SOCIAL CIRCLE – The July 4th holiday often means time on the water for boaters across the United States. With an increased public presence on the water, there is also an increase in the number of boating incidents and fatalities that take place during this time¹. From July 2 – 4, Georgia DNR Law Enforcement, in partnership with the [National Association of State Boating Law Administrators \(NASBLA\)](#) and the U.S. Coast Guard, will be participating in the national *Operation Dry Water* heightened awareness and enforcement weekend. Law enforcement agencies from across the country will be focused on educating boaters about safe boating practices, which includes sober boating.

Alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor in recreational boater deaths.¹ Over the course of the July 4th holiday weekend, Georgia game wardens will be working to increase public awareness of the dangers of boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs, for both operators and passengers.

“The tragedies that happen on our waterways because individuals choose to boat while impaired are preventable,” says Colonel Thomas Barnard, director of the Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division. “As law enforcement, it is our job to do everything we can to ensure the safety of our recreational boaters and paddlers. That is why we are joining all 56 states and U.S. territories again this year to do our part in keeping boaters safe and preventing incidents, deaths and injuries caused by boating under the influence.”

Boating while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is equally dangerous for the boat operator and for the boat passenger.² Boaters will notice an overall increase in officer patrols on the water and at recreational boating checkpoints. The combined efforts of the participating law enforcement agencies and outreach partners will result in the removal of impaired operators from our nations waterways, providing a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone on the water.

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Operating a vessel under the influence of drugs or alcohol is illegal on all bodies of water and can lead to serious injuries, death, property damage and legal consequences. The Division reminds boaters to always boat sober and to wear a life jacket when on or around the water.

Operation Dry Water is a year-round boating under the influence awareness and enforcement campaign with the mission of reducing 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 and drug use on the water.

Visit operationdrywater.org for more information about boating under the influence.

¹[2020 U.S. Coast Guard Recreational Boating Statistics](#)

²[2019 Boating Under the Influence \(BUI\) Research Report](#)

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