



Operation Dry Water

This just in from the California Department of Boating and Waterways:

ENFORCEMENT OF BOATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE LAWS TO BE STEPPED UP JUNE 27-28

"Operation Dry Water" Part of Nationwide Effort

SACRAMENTO – Recreational boaters may want to think twice before reaching for that cold beer this weekend. Marine law enforcement officers, as part of a national coordinated effort of stepped-up enforcement known as Operation Dry Water, will be out in force on California's waterways June 27-28 looking for boat operators whose Blood Alcohol Content exceeds the state limit of .08 percent. Operation Dry Water will include increased enforcement on patrol, boating under the influence checkpoints as well as boater education.

"In 2008, 49 percent of all boating fatalities were a result of alcohol use," said California Department of Boating and Waterways Director Raynor Tsuneyoshi. "We want people to be safe and have fun while boating, but without consuming alcohol."

Alcohol can impair a boater's judgment, balance, vision, and reaction time. It can increase fatigue and susceptibility to the effects of cold-water immersion. Sun, wind, noise, vibration, and motion – "stressors" common to the boating environment – intensify the side effects of alcohol, drugs, and some prescription medications.

"There will be zero tolerance for anyone found operating a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs on our waters," said California Boating Safety Officers Association President Cary Smith. "There will be arrests this weekend, and some boaters will face the consequences of boating under the influence, but we'd much rather arrest someone than to have to tell their friends and family they're never coming back."

According to California State Law, a person convicted of operation of a vessel while intoxicated could receive up to a \$1,000 fine, six months in jail or both.

Operation Dry Water is a joint program of California, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and the U.S. Coast Guard. Twenty-nine California law enforcement agencies will be participating in the program (see attachment).

To find out more about Operation Dry Water, please visit www.nasbla.org . For California boating safety information and laws, please visit www.dbw.ca.gov.

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