

CDanaPointHarbor Boating Advisory

Department of Boating and Waterways Issues Safety Reminder for Labor Day Weekend



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SACRAMENTO, Calif. - The Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) issued a safety reminder to boaters for the upcoming Labor Day weekend.

"California's waterways are expected to be crowded during Labor Day weekend", stated DBW's Acting Director Lucia Becerra. "Wearing a life jacket, avoiding alcohol and maintaining a proper lookout are the top three life-saving practices that boaters are being asked to follow for a safe and pleasant weekend."

Life Jackets

Knowing how to swim does not make you drown-proof. Statistics show that many boating fatalities involved boaters not wearing life jackets, getting knocked unconscious and going under the water. A properly fitted life jacket will help keep you float until help arrives. So far this year, 17 drowning victims have been reported to DBW. Eleven were not wearing life jackets, five were and one is unknown.

Alcohol

It is against the law to operate a boat, or be towed behind or alongside a boat with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08 percent or more. Designating a driver is not enough on vessels. The concept works well in cars, but drunken passengers on boats can easily fall overboard, swim near the propeller, or cause loading problems by leaning over the side or standing up in small vessels, causing them to capsize. Everyone who drinks alcohol on board a boat is at risk. If you do drink, wear a life jacket.

Operator Inattention

Operator inattention is the leading cause of boating accidents, contributing to 35 percent of all California boating accidents last year. While the operator is ultimately responsible for maintaining a proper lookout, it is a good idea to designate someone else on board to help watch for other traffic, especially on a large boat or in congested areas.

In addition to the top three life saving practices, boat operators are also encouraged to familiarize their passengers with safety equipment and how to be safe aboard their boats (e.g. keep hands inside the boat when near a dock, carbon monoxide dangers, propeller safety, etc.).

For more boating safety tips, visit www.dbw.ca.gov/SafetyTips/. Remember, "If it's your boat, it's your responsibility".