Media Release

BOOZE AND BOATING JUST DON'T MIX

By reading this title you may think, "Not again. Not another booze article. How can we have fun in the water?" You can have all the fun you want, but you also must remember that booze and boating simply don't mix. Most people are not aware of the very real, life threatening dangers associated with consuming alcohol and boating. Add boating stressors to those usual factors resulting from drinking alcohol, and a truly perilous condition is present.

Alcohol impairs your motor skills. On the water, there are additional factors that add to the intensity of the impairment: motion of the boat and dehydration. Balance is one of the first things you lose when you consume alcohol. Combine this with the rocking of a boat and you have a real problem in the making - not only for the operator of the boat, but passengers are also at risk. More than half of all boating fatalities are the result of a boater falling overboard.

Drinking alcohol produces certain physiological responses that directly affect safety and well-being. Judgment and skills deteriorate, affecting peripheral vision, balance, and ability to process information. Physical performance and reaction time are reduced. Alcohol reduces depth perception, night vision, focus, and the ability to distinguish colors, especially red and green. Alcohol consumption can also result in inner ear disturbance, which can make it impossible for a person suddenly immersed in water to distinguish up from down. Alcohol creates a sense of warmth and may prevent a person in cold water from getting out before hypothermia sets in.

U.S. Coast Guard 2011 Annual statistics indicate alcohol use is the leading contributing factor in 9% of the fatal boating accidents and 27% of all boating fatalities. These accidents can happen to anyone that drinks while boating.

The waterways offer an open invitation to all types of boating. SAFE BOATING IS NO ACCIDENT!

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