



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

News Release

Contact: Melissa Scallan

Phone: 228-523-4124

14-45-MMS
May 27, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDMR investigating two boating accidents

BILOXI, Miss. – Mississippi Department of Marine Resources officials are investigating two boating incidents that happened over the Memorial Day weekend.

Marine Patrol officers on Sunday, May 25, responded to an accident about 4 p.m. on the Biloxi River near Interstate 10 in which 28-year-old Joshua Turnipseed was riding an inner tube being pulled by a boat and the tube struck a pier.

Turnipseed suffered five broken ribs and three fractured vertebrae and remains hospitalized at Biloxi Regional Medical Center. The driver of the boat, 29-year-old Michael Buckley, was cited for negligent operation.

On Monday, May 26, 9-year-old Joseph Schmidt of New Orleans died after the tube he was riding on at Wolf River struck a tree just before 4 p.m. He was taken to Garden Park Medical Center in Gulfport and was pronounced dead about 5:15 p.m. He suffered blows to his head and neck.

Also riding on the tube were Joseph's brothers, ages 11 and 13. They were not injured. His father, Fredrick Schmidt, was driving the boat, and his mother, Shannon Schmidt, was on the beach.

"Beginning with Memorial Day weekend, we see heavy boat traffic, and we urge drivers and riders to take every precaution to stay safe," said Rusty Pittman, acting chief of Marine Patrol. "Boaters should know their surroundings and be aware of other vessels in the area. They also should make sure they have the proper safety equipment on board."

Marine Patrol officers issued 67 citations between Saturday morning and midnight Monday, MDMR officials said Tuesday.

Twenty-five officers patrolled the waters south of Interstate 10 and inspected 543 boats. Officers issued 48 boat and water safety citations, 17 fishing citations and 2 boating under the influence citations.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at www.dmr.ms.gov.

—END—