



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDMR Marine Patrol to participate in Operation Dry Water June 26-28

BILOXI, Miss. – MDMR’s Office of Marine Patrol is joining law enforcement agencies across the country this weekend for Operation Dry Water, a national campaign to promote awareness and enforcement of boating under the influence.

Participating agencies include the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, Pascagoula Police Department, Gautier Police Department, D’Iberville Police Department and the U.S. Coast Guard.

From June 26-28, law enforcement officers at the local, state and federal levels will focus on those violating boating under the influence laws. They will educate boaters about the dangers of boating under the influence of drugs and alcohol, as well as removing from the water those who choose to boat while impaired.

“The Mississippi Coast has some great waterways for fishing, boating and other recreational activities,” said Keith Davis, chief of MDMR’s Marine Patrol. “We want people to enjoy these resources, but we also want them to know the risks and consequences of boating under the influence.”

In 2014, alcohol use was the primary factor in nearly one-fourth of boater deaths.

“The decision about whether to drink and boat under the influence is a choice every boater makes,” said John Fetterman, deputy executive director of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. “Boating under the influence is a 100 percent preventable crime. Operation Dry Water, participating law enforcement agencies and our boating safety partners encourage boaters to stay safe by staying sober while boating.”

Environmental stressors, such as wind, noise and the movement of the boat, intensify the effects of alcohol or drug use on an individual while boating. Boaters can become impaired more quickly on the water.

Since the inception of the campaign in 2009, law enforcement officers have removed 1,875 BUI operators from the nation’s waterways and made contact with more than 604,250 boaters during the annual three-day weekend.

In 2014, MDMR Marine Patrol officers issued 24 boating citations and one BUI. Officers checked 626 people and 184 boats. Nationally in 2014, 585 local, state and federal law enforcement agencies and USCG units from 56 states and territories participated in Operation Dry Water.

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.

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