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The Waukesha County Sheriff's Office takes part in *Operation Dry Water* to deter boating under the influence

National effort to prevent impaired boating

As boaters look forward to the 4th of July holiday, thousands of law enforcement officers across the United States will be on heightened alert looking for those violating boating under the influence (BUI) laws. From July 2 – 4, the Waukesha County Sheriff's Office Boat Patrol, in partnership with the [National Association of State Boating Law Administrators \(NASBLA\)](#) and the U.S. Coast Guard, will be participating in the national *Operation Dry Water* heightened awareness and enforcement weekend. Law enforcement agencies across the country will be focusing on preventing incidents related to impaired boating and educating boaters about safe boating practices, including sober boating.

Alcohol use is the leading contributing factor in recreational boater deaths.¹ Over the course of the July 4th holiday, the Waukesha County Sheriff's Office will be working to increase public awareness of the dangers of boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs, for both operators and passengers.

Boating under the influence continues to be a problem on our waterways. Each year we are faced with incidents and tragedies that could have been avoided if it weren't for the presence of drugs or alcohol. As a part of the community ourselves, we want to ensure that recreational boaters, paddlers, and anyone enjoying our waterways have a safe place to spend their time. That is why the Waukesha County Sheriff's Office is joining hundreds of agencies nationwide to do our part in keeping boaters safe and preventing incidents and fatalities related to boating under the influence.”

Boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs is equally dangerous for the boat operator and for the boat passenger.² Operating a vessel under the influence of drugs or alcohol is illegal on all bodies of water and can lead to serious injuries, death and legal consequences. In Wisconsin, it is illegal to operate a vessel with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.08 percent or higher. The Waukesha County Sheriff's Office reminds boaters to always boat sober and to wear a life jacket when on or around the water.

Operation Dry Water is a year-round boating under the influence awareness and enforcement campaign with the mission of reducing the number of alcohol and drug related incidents and fatalities through increased recreational boater awareness and by fostering a stronger and more visible deterrent to alcohol and drug use on the water.

Visit operationdrywater.org for more information about boating under the influence.

Sheriff Eric Severson
Waukesha County

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¹[2019 U.S. Coast Guard Recreational Boating Statistics](#)

²[2019 Boating Under the Influence \(BUI\) Research Report](#)