

Dept. of Natural Resources: Wear a life jacket this holiday weekend

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds the public to keep safety top of mind as they cast off this Labor Day weekend by boating sober and always [wearing a life jacket](#).

[There have been 13 boating-related fatalities](#) so far this boating season, 12 of which were not wearing life jackets. The law requires one wearable and correctly-sized life jacket be readily available for each person aboard.

“Emergencies are unplanned and can happen when you least expect it,” said Lt. Darren Kuhn, DNR Boating Law Administrator. “Emergencies do not allow the time needed to grab a life jacket and then put it on.”

In addition, leave the alcohol at the dock until done boating for the day.

“Alcohol use and poor decision making are the two biggest contributing factors that lead to boating-related incidents,” said Kuhn. “Alcohol affects people very differently on the water than on dry ground. The constant exposure to sun, waves, wind and all other environmental factors increase the speed at which alcohol affects somebody while on the boat.”

[State law requires all people born after Jan. 1, 1989, to take a boater education course before they are legally able to operate a motorboat.](#)

Follow these steps to ensure a safe excursion:

- Slow down at night.
- Check your navigation lights before the sun goes down.
 - All motorboats are required to have red/green navigation lights and white

all-around light when operating after sunset.

- Slow down if visibility is an issue or boating on unfamiliar waterways.
- Keep an eye on the weather and let someone know where you are going.

[More boating safety tips are available on the DNR website.](#) Stay safe and enjoy the water!