

For Immediate Release

Date: Monday, June 29, 2026

Drinking and Boating? Enhanced BUII Patrols July 3 - 5

The Oregon State Marine Board, in partnership with marine law enforcement across the state, will be participating in Operation Dry Water, July 3rd through July 5th, as part of a nationally coordinated effort to reduce the number of accidents and fatalities related to boating under the influence of intoxicants (BUII).

BUII includes consumption of prescription drugs, alcohol, inhalants, marijuana, or any combination impairing a person's ability to operate a boat safely.

The effects of drugs and alcohol are amplified on the water due to the combined impacts of environmental stressors like sun glare, wind, wave motion, and other factors. Alcohol also dehydrates the body, making sudden immersion into cold water increase the risk of drowning, particularly if the person is not wearing a life jacket.



Impaired boaters face serious penalties. The consequences of a BUII conviction include possible jail time, a \$6,250 fine, and loss of boating privileges. Marine officers can legally obtain blood, breath, or urine if a boater fails field sobriety tests. If a boat driver retrieves a boat from the water onto a boat trailer, they could be charged with Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants (DUII).

“Recreational boating is a relatively safe activity when boating sober, wearing life jackets, and staying aware of the surroundings,” says Brian Paulsen, Boating Safety Program Manager for the Marine Board. So far this year, the common denominators for boating fatalities are not wearing a life jacket, falling overboard, and alcohol consumption.

If you see an impaired operator or someone who is operating in a way that threatens others' safety, boaters are encouraged to call 911 to file a report. Remember the boat type and characteristics, number of passengers, describe the observed behavior, nearest boat ramp, and, if possible, the boat's registration number/letters at the bow.

For more information about Operation Dry Water, visit www.operationdrywater.org.

-End-