

Concerted effort to catch boaters under the influence

Recreational boaters may want to think twice before reaching for that cold beer this weekend. Marine law enforcement officers, as part of a national coordinated effort of stepped-up enforcement known as Operation Dry Water, will be out in force looking for boat operators whose blood alcohol content exceeds the state limit of 0.08 percent.

Operation Dry Water will include increased patrols, breathalyzer tests, as well as boater education.

Alcohol use has become the leading contributing factor in fatal recreational boating accidents, according to law enforcement. Impaired boaters caught this weekend can expect to be arrested, go to jail and face severe penalties.

According to the most recent U.S. Coast Guard statistics, boating under the influence is still the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents, with 17 percent of boating fatalities a direct result of alcohol or drug use.

Operation Dry Water is a national campaign that was created to detect and remove impaired boaters from waters across the nation. It is organized by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and the U.S. Coast Guard.

More information about the June 25-27 operation is available at www.operationdrywater.org.