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FACTS

- It is illegal in every state and U.S. territory to operate a boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Alcohol can impair a boater's judgment, balance, vision and reaction time. It can increase fatigue and susceptibility to the effects of cold-water immersion.
- Sun, wind, noise, vibration and motion – "stressors" common to the boating environment – intensify the side effects of alcohol, drugs and some medications.
- U.S. Coast Guard statistics reveal that in 2007 21% of deaths from recreational boating accidents resulted from the use of alcohol.
- Boating Under the Influence (BUI) is dangerous for passengers as well and can lead to slips, falls overboard and other life-threatening accidents.
- Operating a boat with a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of .08 % or higher is against state and federal law.
- A boat operator with a BAC above .10% is estimated to be more than 10 times as likely to die in a boating accident than an operator with 0% BAC.
- Boating Under the Influence (BUI) puts a boater at risk of arrest with his or her boat impounded.

- Penalties vary by state but can include fines, jail, and loss of boating or even driving privileges.
- Alcohol consumption can result in inner ear disturbance, which can make it impossible for a person suddenly immersed in water to distinguish up from down.
- According to the National Transportation Safety Board, recreational boating accidents are second only to highway accidents in the number of transportation fatalities.
- Impairment can be even more dangerous for boaters than for drivers, since most boaters have less experience and confidence operating a boat than they do driving a car. Boaters average only about 110 hours of boating per year.

Other Boating Safety Facts

- Over the years, 2/3 of those who died in recreational boating accidents drowned, and more than 90% of those people were not wearing a life jacket.
- Nearly 70% of all reported fatalities occur in accidents where the operator has not received boating safety instruction.
- Boaters should get a Vessel Safety Check every year. Examinations have revealed life-threatening problems, even on boats owned by safe, responsible boaters.