



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

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TIP OF THE WEEK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 2, 2024

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BOATING SAFETY

Spring is here, and before we know it, summer will arrive. In the coming weeks, people throughout the state will start pulling out their boats after a winter in storage. Time on the water can be a great activity for your mental health and can build positive relationships with others. As with all activities, a little planning and caution go a long way in increasing your safety during your boating fun.

Follow these tips to keep yourself and others safer during boat activities:

- Know the legal requirements for your vessel, these vary by size. Safety equipment must be accessible and in working condition at all times.
- Wear your life jackets. 85% of boating fatalities could be avoided by wearing a personal floatation device. It can't save your life if you don't wear it.
- Ensure each person's life jacket is appropriately sized, fits securely, and meets their weight requirement.
- Be prepared and carry extra equipment such as an anchor, first aid kit, visual distress signal, tool kit, flashlight with extra batteries, a cell phone, and a bucket to bail water out of the boat. Carrying a handheld VHF radio can help connect you to help in the event your vessel experiences electrical malfunction.
- Don't overload your boat. Follow the recommendations on the capacity plate of your boat.
- Capsizing, sinking, and falling overboard account for 70% of boating fatalities. If your boat capsizes, your best chance for survival and rescue is to stay with the boat. Pull as much of your body out of the water as possible to preserve body warmth.

Lincoln County Sheriff's Office

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- Hypothermia can be a killer; keep your body as dry and warm as possible. Change into dry clothes as soon as possible.
- It is illegal to operate any boat while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Use a designated driver - a sober skipper saves lives.
- Pay attention to your level of awareness and reaction time. Stressors such as exposure to sun, wind, cold water, vibration, noise, and alcohol all affect your ability to react.
- Don't run out of fuel and make a plan to refuel before it is dire. Practice the 1/3 rule: 1/3 for trip, 1/3 for return, and 1/3 for spare.
- Fuel vapors are heavier than air and collect in the bilge. Never fill gasoline cans in the boat.
- When anchoring, use a line several times longer than the depth of the water; this will help account for changes in water levels due to the changing tide or other factors. Never anchor by the stern.
- File a float plan. Let someone know when and where you're boating and when you'll be back.
- You're responsible for damage or injury caused by your wake. Exercise caution around other boaters, docks, and people in the water.
- By state law, all persons operating a motorboat greater than 9.9 horsepower are required to carry a Boater Education Card. The card shows that the operator has passed an approved boater education course or equivalency exam.

For further information on Boating in Oregon, people are encouraged to pick up the Oregon Boaters Handbook available at your Lincoln County Sheriff's Office or you can visit the Oregon State Marine Board website: www.boatoregon.com

For more information and tips visit our website at www.lincolncountysheriff.net and like us on Facebook at Lincoln County Sheriff's Office – Oregon.

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