

State of New Mexico  
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Boat Safe, Boat Smart, Have Fun!** ***Boaters urged to boat safe this holiday weekend***



**Santa Fe, NM:** New Mexico State Parks staff are gearing up for an increase in visitation and recreational boating activities at lake parks during the Independence Day holiday weekend. Park officials want to remind boaters to make safety their priority as they prepare to head out for a fantastic weekend on the water!

“Water levels are doing well this season in our lakes and rivers, park visitors are encouraged to wear their lifejackets anytime they are near the water,” said Christy Tafoya, Director of State Parks. “Lifejackets save lives, period,” she added. Whether you are swimming, kayaking, paddleboarding, canoeing or boating; always wear your lifejacket.

To have a safe, enjoyable, hunting or fishing trip this weekend, state park officials recommend following these simple tips:

- ✓ Wear your lifejacket! Once you’re in the water it’s too late! Lifejackets save lives!
- ✓ Never boat under the influence of drugs or alcohol--impairment on the water is deadly!
- ✓ Avoid placing passengers in danger by overloading your boat--refer to your vessel’s capacity plate.
- ✓ Minimize your movement in the vessel. Capsizing, sinking or falling overboard for small boats accounts for more than 70% of all boating fatalities.
- ✓ Know the weather forecast. Weather conditions can change rapidly and defeat your operator skills and vessel’s capabilities!
- ✓ Tell someone where you are going, when you plan to return and update them on your plan as it changes; or file a float plan at the local marina or park office.
- ✓ Make sure you have a way to call for assistance--marine radios and cell phones are good options.

- ✓ In the event of an emergency, if possible, try and stay with your vessel because rescuers will look for you there first.

The New Mexico State Parks Division offers FREE boating safety classes around the state and online throughout the year. State law requires that you wear a lifejacket when on a canoe, kayak, or raft and that all children 12 years old and younger wear a lifejacket while on the deck of a moving vessel.

Experience Adventure at YOUR state parks; for more information, call 888-NMPARKS or visit [nmparks.com](http://nmparks.com).

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*The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.*

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