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News Release

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Stay Afloat, Don't Drink and Boat! ***Boaters urged to boat safe this holiday weekend***



Santa Fe, NM: New Mexico State Parks Marine Enforcement officers are gearing up for Operation Dry Water which begins Friday, June 30th through July 2nd. Operation Dry Water weekend is held annually close to the Fourth of July holiday, a holiday known for increased boaters on the waters where alcohol use is prevalent, as are subsequent boating accidents and fatalities. "Operation Dry water is a nationwide coordinated enforcement effort involving state and local law enforcement agencies to apprehend intoxicated boaters. Checkpoints and increased patrols around high traffic areas will be used to help stop intoxicated boaters who can also become intoxicated drivers", said Barry Lucero, NM State Parks Chief Law Enforcement Officer.

Park officials are reminding boaters to make safety their priority as they prepare to head out for a fantastic weekend on the water! We are expecting an increase in visitation and recreational boating activities at lake parks during this Independence Day holiday weekend.

"Water levels are doing extremely 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, paddle-boarding, canoeing or boating; always wear your lifejacket.

To have a safe, enjoyable, boating 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.

- ✓ 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, nmparks.com or visit www.boatnm.com



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