

State of New Mexico  
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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**Susana Martinez**  
Governor

**David Martin**  
Cabinet Secretary

**Brett F. Woods, Ph.D.**  
Deputy Cabinet Secretary

**Tommy Mutz, Division Director**  
State Parks Division



## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Contact: Beth Wojahn 505-476-3226; E-mail: [beth.wojahn@state.nm.us](mailto:beth.wojahn@state.nm.us)  
Jim Winchester 505-231-8800; E-mail: [jim.winchester@state.nm.us](mailto:jim.winchester@state.nm.us)

### ***Boating and Water Safety Preparedness at YOUR New Mexico State Parks***

**Santa Fe, NM** -- New Mexico State Parks invites you out to fish, boat, sail or paddle and enjoy the great outdoors and wants visitors hoping to have memorable days fishing and boating this spring to be aware of two potential issues: the weather and the hazard of a fall overboard in springtime water temperatures. Warm weather can be deceptive -- warm air temperatures do not always mean warm water.

With this in mind, the New Mexico State Parks Boating Safety and Education Program would like to share some advice for visitors on the water this spring.

#### **Weather**

Spring winds in New Mexico have a big impact on boating. Since January, three vessels have capsized in the state due to unexpected winds. Thankfully, all three boaters survived the plunge. Visitors who do not check the weather for their day out on the water may experience an unexpected day spent in the water.

State Parks officials recommend checking websites such as [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) prior to taking a trip to a New Mexico lake. Inputting the town and zip code near the lake will bring up the seven- day weather forecast which is great for planning ahead for the weekend. A moveable map on the site also provides hourly projected wind speeds, gusts and wind direction for a specific lake so boaters to plan accordingly. Boat safe, don't lose your boat to the elements and always check the weather.

#### **Water Temperature**

Our land and air temperatures are rising but the water is not keeping pace. Taking a plunge into 45 degree water is a big surprise. Cold water immersion can cause serious injury or death due to hypothermia.

"New Mexico's beautiful State Park lakes see a surge of boating in the spring." said Toby Velasquez, State Park Chief of Boating and Law Enforcement. "We encourage families to come and enjoy outdoor water recreation at this time of year."

"Visitors must know, however, that lake and river water is often derived from northern rivers and streams and can be very cold. At this time of year, it is more important than ever to take proper precautions to minimize the chances of going into the water - and to be prepared for immersion if you do," he said.

Sudden immersion in cold water results in a "gasp" reflex to a person overboard. Given this involuntary response, a person has a much better chance of survival when wearing a life jacket.

State Park officials recommend you watch a video to learn steps to take if you fall into cold water. Check it out on YouTube: "Cold Water Boot Camp USA: 1-10-1." To see more effects of cold water immersion, and the benefits of wearing a life jacket, access the Cold Water Boot Camp video at:

<http://www.coldwaterbootcampusa.org/videos.shtml>

State Parks Boating Safety reminds all boaters that every vessel must have a properly fitting life jacket that is in good condition for every person aboard. Children under 12 must be wearing a life jacket at all times while underway, unless the child is below deck or in an enclosed cabin. Also, on any type of paddle craft on any New Mexico waters, a life jacket must be worn at all times.

Learn about safe boating by taking one of our FREE state approved boating courses in class or on line. New Mexico law requires proof of education for vessel operators 25 years of age or younger this year. Remember to check your vessel registration to ensure that it is current before you go out on the water. Visit us at [www.nmparks.com](http://www.nmparks.com) or call 1-888-NMPARKS.

*Boat Safe and Boat Smart in New Mexico!*



Conditions are Right for Adventure at New Mexico State Parks!

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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.*

1220 South St. Francis Drive • Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505  
Phone (505) 476-3355 • Fax (505) 476-3361 • [www.nmparks.com](http://www.nmparks.com)