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New Mexico State Parks join Operation Dry Water to increase awareness of the dangers associated with boating under the influence

Santa Fe, NM – In an effort to educate recreational boaters nationwide about the dangers of boating while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the New Mexico State Parks (State Parks) Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) will be participating in the annual *Operation Dry Water* campaign. The mission of *Operation Dry Water* is to decrease the number of alcohol- and drug-related incidents and fatalities on the water.

Operation Dry Water weekend, July 1-3, is the national weekend dedicated to amplified recreational boater outreach, education, and coordinated enforcement surrounding boating under the influence. Alcohol use continues to be the leading known contributing factor in recreational boater deaths and a leading contributor in boating incidents.^[1] The use of both legal and illegal drugs also impairs judgment and reaction time and creates dangerous circumstances while on the water.

^[1] [2021 U.S. Coast Guard Recreational Boating Statistics](#)

^[2] [2019 Boating Under the Influence \(BUI\) Research Report](#)

State Parks encourage all boaters to enjoy this boating season and help keep everyone safe by choosing to boat sober all year long.

“Individuals and families, residents and non-residents alike, head to New Mexico’s waterways for a fun, safe, and pleasant experience out on the water. Our goal is to not only educate boaters regarding the dangers of impaired boating, but also to remind them of other safe boating practices, such as enrolling in a boater education course and always wearing a life jacket,” says Manuel Overby, State Parks Chief of Law Enforcement and Boating Safety. “To ensure that everyone is safe out on the water, we have partnered with *Operation Dry Water* to assist in educating operators and passengers regarding the dangers associated with boating under the influence. State Parks wants boaters to have a safe and enjoyable summer while out on the water, and to do that boat operators and passengers must remain sober and alert while underway.”

As part of Operation Dry Water weekend, recreational boating safety advocates and volunteers, in collaboration with law enforcement in every U.S. state and territory, will be out at marinas and on the water educating boaters about safe boating practices. Law enforcement will also be working to identify and remove dangerous and impaired operators. In 2022, law enforcement officers across the nation removed 794 impaired operators from our nation’s waterways during the Operation Dry Water weekend.

State Parks support these educational and enforcement efforts during the 4th of July holiday weekend to ensure the safety of recreational boaters and water sport enthusiasts.



Courtesy: Navajo Lake State Park, NM State Parks

Boaters can learn more about boating under the influence by visiting the State Parks Boating Safety and Education Program online at www.emnrd.nm.gov/spd/ or operationdrywater.org. Operation Dry Water is coordinated nationally by the [National Association of State Boating Law Administrators \(NASBLA\)](#) in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard.

For more information on all 35 of your New Mexico State Parks, please visit our [website](#). Book your camping reservation six months in advance! Log onto <https://www.reserveamerica.com/> and save the perfect camping spot at your favorite New Mexico State Park today!



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