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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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New Mexico State Parks expects a busy Labor Day weekend
Celebrate safely and wear a life jacket on the water!

Santa Fe, NM – This weekend marks the unofficial end to summer, and it’s expected to draw thousands of New Mexicans out to their state parks and waterways. [The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department State Parks Division](#) would like to remind visitors that life jackets save lives – wear them! Chalecos Salvavidas Salvan Vidas, Usalos!

Eleven people have died while boating in New Mexico since August of last year. Out of those, 75% died from drowning and most were not wearing a life jacket. Most of these deaths occurred on boats where the operator had not taken a boating safety course.

It’s equally important to wear a life jacket while swimming. Even strong swimmers have underestimated the water and overestimated their abilities. By then, it’s too late. Since August of last year, 5 people have drowned after voluntarily entering the water to wade or swim.

“Wear a life jacket every time you are on the water, regardless of the activity,” said Scott Chalmers, State Parks Boating Safety & Education Program Coordinator. “Accidents can happen much too quickly to put on a life jacket. It should be U.S. Coast Guard approved, appropriate for the activity, and fit you properly.”

State law requires motorboat operators born on or after January 1, 1989, to take and pass a boating safety course. The course is good for life and meets the requirements for boating safety education in many other states. It can also save you money on your boat insurance! Courses are

offered online and can be accessed by visiting our website at emnrd.nm.gov. In-person classes are offered by New Mexico State Parks for FREE statewide. Next year's class schedule will be announced this winter.

Last year nearly 140,000 people visited all 35 New Mexico State Parks in the week leading up to Labor Day. The top three parks with the highest visitation were Elephant Butte Lake State Park (28,559), Navajo Lake State Park (15,997), and Ute Lake State Park (14,502).

New Mexico State Parks can be found in 25 of 33 counties. Reserve your favorite camping spot up to six months in advance on emnrd.nm.gov or reserveamerica.com today!

The Boating Safety Seven



1. Wear your life jacket
2. Take a boating safety class
3. Carry all required safety gear
4. Use your engine cut-off device
5. File a float plan
6. Be aware of weather and water conditions
7. Boat sober, and be considerate of others



New Mexico

¡VÁMONOS! LET'S GO NEW MEXICO!

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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and resource development services to the public and other state agencies. Learn more at <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov>

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