

Stay safe this summer with these boating safety tips:

- **Take a boating safety course**, such as the Minnesota Boating Safety Course and Exam, which is available online.
- **Have a float plan before boating.** Know your route and make sure someone knows when to expect you home.
- **Learn to swim.**
- **Learn CPR.**

Prior to boating:

- Check equipment, fuel level, and the weather.
- Make sure you have:
 - Working fire extinguisher and CO detector
 - Throwable life preserver on a rope
 - Life jackets for each passenger
 - Sunscreen
 - Bucket to bail out water
 - Noise making device should you get in trouble and need to alert someone

While boating:

- Wear your lifejacket.
- Don't swim within 10 feet of the back of a boat for at least 10-15 minutes after the engine has been shut off.
- Be aware of the exhaust exposure of other boats when you are parked near them. The Carbon Monoxide from the exhaust on a boat can equal the exhaust from 166 cars.
- Be aware of the symptoms of Carbon Monoxide toxicity- headaches, fatigue, nausea, dizziness, confusion or unresponsiveness. Many of the symptoms can be mistaken for a long day in sun, being on rocky water and intoxication.
- Avoid prolonged exposure to the exhaust area of the boat.
- Avoid swimming or diving under the swim platforms of the boat or near the motor.
- Don't dive off a boat until you know the depth of the water.
- Towed passengers (tubers, skiers) should be at least 20 feet from the back of the boat.
- Don't drink and drive a boat, and don't drink and watch children. Inattentiveness can result in a child drowning.

Just as on the roadways...be aware of other boats that may have inattentive boat drivers, drunk boat drivers, and inexperienced boat drivers!