



# DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Scott Mittelstadt Chief Deputy

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt

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The Dodge County Sheriff's Office and Recreation Patrol Deputy Vorhies would like to remind those who are looking forward to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday weekend that operating a boat or PWC (personal watercraft) under the influence of drugs or alcohol on any waterbody in Dodge County or the State of Wisconsin is illegal. In Wisconsin, it is illegal to operate a vessel with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.08 percent or higher. Boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs is dangerous for the boat operator, any boat passengers and especially other boaters who are out on the water and operating safely.

The Dodge County Sheriff's Office Recreation Patrol Deputy will be participating in the national *Operation Dry Water* enforcement and awareness campaign throughout the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday weekend (July 2<sup>nd</sup>- July 4<sup>th</sup>), in partnership with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). Law enforcement will be focusing on preventing incidents related to impaired boating and educating boaters about safe boating practices, including sober boating. Alcohol use is the leading contributing factor in recreational boat deaths according to 2019 USCG Recreational Boating Statistics.

The Dodge County Sheriff's Office has responded to one fatal boat incident in Dodge County this year and the State of Wisconsin has already had a total of 13 fatalities reported on our waterbodies. We want to make sure all boaters are operating safely and are sober this weekend. The Dodge County Sheriff's Office also wants to remind boaters to wear a USCG approved life jacket when on or around the water (even if you are a strong swimmer), to communicate with family or friends about where you are going and when you will return, and to keep an eye on changing weather conditions, waves and current.

*Operation Dry Water* is a year-round boating under the influence awareness and enforcement campaign with the mission of reducing the number of alcohol and drug related incidents and fatalities through increased recreational boater awareness and by fostering a stronger and more visible deterrent to alcohol and drug use on the water.

Visit [operationdrywater.org](http://operationdrywater.org) for more information about boating under the influence.

Questions may be directed to Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt.

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