

BREAKERS

From the National Safe Boating Council



Booze and Boating Just Don't Mix

Boaters need to remember that booze and boating do not mix. Alcohol impairs your ability to operate a vessel safely in the same way that it impairs your ability to drive a car safely. However, there are other factors that add to the intensity of your impairment when on the water, including the motion of the boat and dehydration.

Balance is one of the first things you lose when you consume alcohol, and when you combine this with the rocking of a boat, the chance of falling overboard increases.

The sun causes you to perspire, which removes the water from your body but leaves the alcohol in. This can cause impairment to happen more quickly. In a study of boating fatalities in four states, 51 percent of the people who died had a blood alcohol content of .04 or more. A blood alcohol of .10 or more was found in 30 percent of the fatalities.

There are several myths about alcohol that boaters should know:

- Beer is NOT less intoxicating than any other alcoholic beverage.
- Only time will sober a person, NOT black coffee or a cold shower.
- It is NOT easy to tell if someone is impaired. Many experienced drinkers can hide their impairment.
- You are NOT the best person to judge if you are fit to drive. Your judgment is one of the first things you lose when you drink.

Remember, safe boating starts before your first trip out on the water. Do not wait until an accident happens to educate yourself as well as your family on the rules of safe boating.



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