



NEWS RELEASE
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Agencies Unite to Bring Summer Safety Message To Land and Water
“Choose Your Ride” Impaired Driving Message Coupled With Click It or Ticket Campaign

(ATLANTA) To highlight the importance of safe driving and safe boating as the unofficial start of summer draws near, the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety is once again partnering with the Department of Natural Resources and Georgia State Patrol to add an impaired driving message to its Memorial Day Click It or Ticket campaign.

This year, Georgia boaters and motorists will be warned to choose their ride. Whether they’re drunk behind the wheel of their boat or their car, they will be caught and they will go to jail. Law enforcement agencies are cracking down to prevent boaters and motorists from having to ride in a patrol car, a DNR enforcement vehicle or even a hearse.

“We’ve got our DNR partners on the water and our GSP and local law enforcement partners on the road,” said GOHS Director Harris Blackwood. “No matter where you choose to celebrate this Memorial Day weekend, if you’re drunk behind the wheel, your home for the night will likely be in a jail cell.”

To highlight this year’s commitment to summer safety as the holiday weekend approaches, GOHS will be joining the state patrol and DNR at six popular boating destinations throughout the state to remind boaters and motorists alike to stay sober and buckle up behind the wheel. The agencies will take a two-day media tour to visit Lake Oliver, Lake Blackshear, Ocmulgee River, Ogeechee River, Savannah River and Lake Allatoona.

“The summer boating season is a great time for families to get outside and enjoy Georgia’s beautiful and abundant waterways” said DNR Law Enforcement Division Assistant Director Lt. Colonel Jeff Weaver. “Boaters must always keep safety in mind, make it a habit to wear a life jacket, always have a sober operator and do not take risks out on the water.”

As usual, GOHS will be launching its Memorial Day campaign in conjunction with the annual “100 Days of Summer H.E.A.T.” initiative. Both campaigns begin on May 19 and while the Memorial Day campaign will end on June 1, 100 Days of Summer H.E.A.T. will go through Sept. 2.

“Enjoy your time with family and friends as we remember those who died fighting for our freedom,” said Col. Mark McDonough, commissioner of the Department of Public Safety. “As you travel, remember to always buckle up, properly restrain children, watch your speed, avoid distractions inside your vehicle, and use a designated driver if alcohol consumption will be part of your festivities.”

DNR will be joining its fellow law enforcement agencies in the multi-jurisdictional enforcement campaign designed to reduce fatal crash counts during the summer driving period. The campaign lasts from through Labor Day, targeting motorists and boaters under the influence, as well as those engaging in other unsafe behaviors behind the wheel, including driving at unsafe speeds.

For the first time in five years, unrestrained crash deaths have gone up nationwide. In 2012, seatbelts saved an estimated 12,174 people from dying, but another 10,335 unbuckled motorists still lost their lives.

For more information on any of GOHS’s lifesaving highway safety campaigns, visit www.gahighwaysafety.org.

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