

The Kootenai County Sheriff's Office will be participating in **Operation Dry Water** June 28-30, as part of a nationally coordinated effort to reduce the number of accidents and fatalities related to boating under the influence (BUI). The mission of Operation Dry Water also brings awareness and education to recreational boaters about the dangers of alcohol and drug use on the water.

During **Operation Dry Water**, KCSO marine deputies will be out in force looking for boaters whose blood alcohol content (BAC) exceeds the state limit of .08. The weekend will include increased emphasis patrols as well as boater education. Impaired boaters can expect to be arrested or face other serious penalties. In the State of Idaho the consequences for BUI include fines, jail and loss of boating privileges.

The Kootenai County Sheriff's Office is dedicated to keeping boaters safe on our waters. Boating is a safe and enjoyable pastime when people stay alert and follow the rules. In an effort to keep the boating public safe, our marine deputies will be out on all the lakes and rivers in Kootenai County looking for boaters who are operating a vessel under the influence.

Boating under the influence of drugs or alcohol continues to be a major problem across the nation. U.S. Coast Guard data reveals that alcohol is the primary contributing factor in recreational boating fatalities<sup>i</sup>. Intoxicated boat operators and passengers run a significantly increased risk of being involved in a fatal boating accident.

**Operation Dry Water** is a nationwide education and enforcement initiative launched by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in 2009 in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard.

**Operation Dry Water 2013** is a joint program of the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. For more information, visit [www.operationdrywater.org](http://www.operationdrywater.org).

Ben Wolfinger, Sheriff  
By Deputy Tim Leeder

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<sup>i</sup> Source: U.S. Coast Guard *Recreational Boating Statistics 2012*