



CITY OF
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE BAINBRIDGE ISLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT REMINDS YOU TO NEVER BOAT
UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

Bainbridge Island, Wash., (June, 2017). The Bainbridge Island Police Department wants to remind you that operating a boat while under the influence of alcohol and drugs is not only unsafe—it's illegal.

Operating a boat under the influence increases the likelihood of an accident and lowers the chance of survival after an accident. In Washington State, in 2016, alcohol and drugs were a factor in 18 percent of fatal boating accidents.

Boating under the influence is arguably more dangerous than driving while impaired. Wind, sun, noise, motion and vibration can amplify the effects. Boats don't have the same safety features as cars, such as airbags and seatbelts. When someone is involved in a car accident, they are not normally faced with the threat of drowning. Finally, the emergency response may not be nearly as quick on the water as on land.

"I want everyone to have an enjoyable and safe boating season," said Chief Matthew Hamner. "I encourage you to designate a sober skipper before heading out on the water, and never operate a boat under the influence or allow an intoxicated person to operate the boat."

Washington state's Boating Under the Influence (BUI) law applies to all boats including kayaks, canoes, rowboats and inflatable fishing rafts. Under the state BUI law, if a law enforcement officer suspects a boat operator to be intoxicated, he or she can require a breath or blood test. The state's legal alcohol limit is .08 and for marijuana it's .05 nanograms. Penalties for operating a boat under the influence include fines up to \$5,000 and jail time up to 364 days.

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