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Alaskans invited to participate in Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day

(Anchorage, AK) – Alaskans are invited to join the Office of Boating Safety in promoting safe boating behavior by wearing their life jackets to work on Friday, May 19, and sharing their photos on social media.

The annual “Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day” event is the public kickoff for Safe Boating Week in Alaska, which runs from May 20-26. Participants in this event can post their photos on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/akboatsafety/> or Instagram using #AKBoat and #SafeBoating.

The goal of this event is to raise awareness of the versatility and comfort of modern life jackets. Boating is a way of life in Alaska but every year, several people die in boating accidents. Five out of six boating fatalities in Alaska are cold-water immersion related drownings, following a vessel capsizing or swamping, being ejected, or a fall overboard. Nine out of ten who died were not wearing a life jacket. Wearing a life jacket is the simplest way to prevent drowning in a boat accident.

Safe Boating Week focuses on the importance of boaters being “rescue-ready” during the boating season: 1.) Wear a life jacket when in an open boat or on deck, 2.) Carry emergency communication and distress signaling devices on their person, 3.) Attach an engine cut-off switch if equipped, and 4.) All boaters have a means to re-board their boats.

“Alaska waters are cold. Even on calm, sunny, warm, clear blue sky days, a cold-water immersion event can be deadly. While it is the law for persons under the age of 13, everyone should commit to always wearing a life jacket regardless of experience or swimming ability when in an open boat or on deck,” said State Boating Law Administrator Jeff Johnson.

The Office of Boating Safety works to promote safe, and enjoyable boating. Additional resources for boaters can be found at www.alaskaboatingsafety.org

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