



Sea Tow Foundation Sober Skipper Program Talking Points

The Sober Skipper Program's goal is to eliminate Boating Under the Influence (BUI) by encouraging boaters to Take the Pledge to designate a qualified and sober operator for every boating trip.

This program is a positive, proactive awareness campaign designed to spread the word about the importance of designating a sober skipper before leaving the dock.

The Sea Tow Foundation's Sober Skipper Program was started in 2015 and, since that time, events have been held in all 50 states where yellow wristbands are distributed signifying that a boater has taken the pledge to be the Sober Skipper. The program materials have been funded through a series of grants from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund as administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Boaters can Take the Pledge or order Sober Skipper Program materials online at www.soberskipper.com.

Additional Sober Skipper Program Talking Points:

- Boating involves wind, noise, sun and the motion of the boat on the water, which makes it hard to concentrate and maintain your balance. Alcohol can intensify these effects and impair your judgment.
- BUI (Boating under the Influence) is against the law in every state and territory. It is 100% preventable.
- BUI laws apply to all motorized boats regardless of size or type as well as non-motorized boats such as canoes and kayaks.
- Alcohol use is the leading contributing factor in boating accidents every year.
- An average of 111 people die every year on the water because of BUI.
- An average of 290 accidents happen every year on the water because of BUI, nearly once a day.
- The average BUI offender is a male between the ages of 24-56 who uses a trailered boat that is between 14-26 feet in length and boats primarily on the weekends.
- Sober Skippers should keep hydrated with water or other non-alcoholic beverages while in charge of operating the boat and taking care of the other passengers.



- Boat operators who drink alcohol or take medications often become drivers of vehicles once on land. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) note that driving drunk kills 30 people every day or one person every 48 minutes and a person is injured due to drunk driving every 2 minutes.
- Wearing a life jacket while boating is the single best way to prevent drowning. Last year, 80% of fatal boating accident victims drowned and 83% of them were not wearing life jackets.

Sources:

“Recreational Boating Statistics.” U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety. Available online at https://www.uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.php

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Available online at <https://www.madd.org/>