

NDG&F May 22nd Newsletter

Summer Safety on the Water

Failure to wear a personal flotation device is the main reason people lose their lives in water recreation accidents.

North Dakota Game and Fish Department boat and water safety coordinator Nancy Boldt said safety begins with wearing a personal flotation device, and knowing what's below the surface of the water. "Water recreationists need to be alert and safe," Boldt said. "Swimmers need to know the water's depth, as serious injuries can occur from diving into water. Large objects hidden below the water's surface can lead to significant injury."

North Dakota law requires all children ages 10 and younger to wear a personal flotation device while in boats of less than 27 feet in length. The law also requires all personal watercraft users to wear a life jacket, as well as anyone towed on skis, tubes, boards or other similar devices.

Water users should make sure to wear life jackets that are the appropriate size, and in good condition. It is also important that children wear a PFD while swimming.

Water skiers and tubers should wear a life jacket with four nylon straps rather than one with a zipper, because straps are stronger than zippers upon impact with water. Anglers or persons paddling a canoe should opt for a PFD that is comfortable enough to wear for an entire outing.

Water skiers and tubers are reminded it takes three to ski and tube. When a person is towed on water skis or a similar device, an observer other than the operator is required on the vessel.

North Dakota boaters also are reminded that marine VHF radios are an important part of boat safety that should not be improperly used by operators. These radios are intended for boat operators who are in distress and facing an emergency situation.

Regulations to help ensure safe boating this summer are found in the [2014-16 North Dakota Fishing Guide](#). A more comprehensive listing is available in the [North Dakota Boat and Water Safety Guide](#) or the [Boat North Dakota education book](#). These guides are available online at the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov, by email at ndgf@nd.gov, or at a local Game and Fish Department office.

Free Fishing Weekend

North Dakota anglers are reminded they can fish for free June 6-7.

That is the weekend North Dakota residents may fish without a license. All other fishing regulations apply.

Refer to the [2014-16 North Dakota Fishing Guide](#) for season information.