

SIGNS OF IMPAIRED BOATING

Signs of impairment on the water are not as clear-cut as signs of impairment on the road. The distance between boats and the movement on the water can make it difficult to know if an operator is impaired. Weather conditions and/or the operator's experience level affect how well they are piloting their vessel.

Talk to your local authorities about what other behaviours to be on the look-out for. These may include operators drinking at their marina or dock and then taking the boat out or impairment at the fuel dock, pump out or on-the-water restaurants.

Generally, boaters who are impaired are more likely to:

- Go too fast for the waterway,
- Operate vessels in a dangerous or careless manner (aggressive turning, high speeds),
- Forget to turn on running lights or other required night-time equipment,
- Openly consume alcohol while underway.

CALL 911

If you see a boater you suspect is impaired by alcohol and/or drugs, contact your local police marine unit or call 911. Try to have as much information as possible and be prepared to answer questions about:

- vessel licence number
- name of boat
- description of boat
- direction of travel
- description of the person operating the vessel
- number of occupants/description
- location and any specific landmarks

**Report
Impaired
Boating**

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**Do not try to follow or intercept someone
you suspect is impaired.
Report it to police and let them handle it.**

DON'T BOAT IMPAIRED



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Impaired boating **IS** impaired driving

Operating a boat while impaired can have deadly results. Long-term study of recreational boating fatalities show that at least 39% of victims had alcohol in their systems.

Alcohol diminishes judgement, reduces motor skills, slows reaction and reflex response times, reduces depth perception and focus, and accelerates hypothermia.

These effects are intensified on the water. With the sun, sounds, motion and boater fatigue, the effects of alcohol consumed on a boat can be much greater than on land.

Boating while impaired is just as dangerous – and just as illegal – as driving a vehicle while impaired. It can result in heavy fines, jail time, the loss of your driver's licence and worse – you could kill yourself or someone else.

Everyone has a role to play in keeping our waters safe.



- Never operate a boat while impaired.
- If you see a boater you suspect is impaired, call your local police marine unit or 911.

Carriage and consumption:

Provincial and federal laws govern when alcohol can be carried and consumed on a boat.

- In most jurisdictions, alcohol cannot be consumed by the operator or passengers while the vessel is underway. The vessel has to be anchored, moored or alongside.
- Alcohol cannot be carried on a boat unless the vessel is equipped with cooking, sleeping and sanitation facilities.

Check with the appropriate provincial/territorial authorities for the specific laws in your area.

Keep the alcohol away until you're docked for the day.

Boating while impaired:

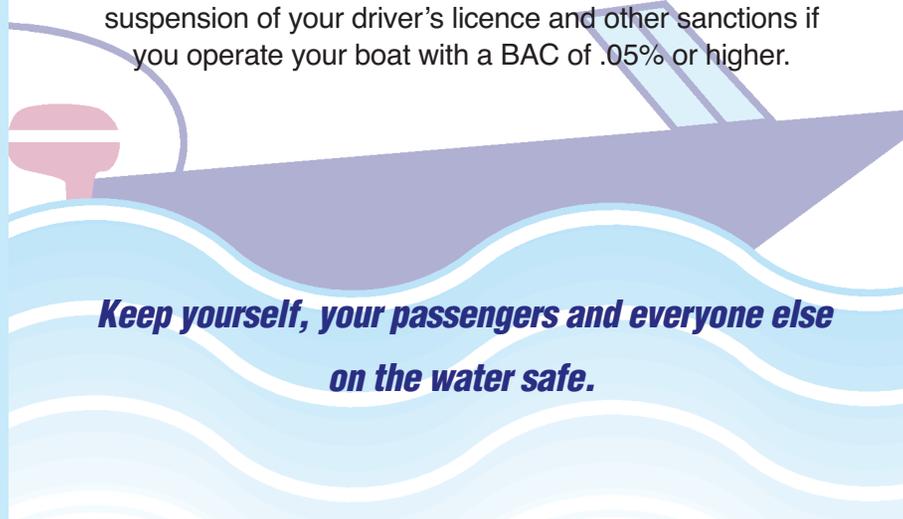
Operating a boat while impaired by alcohol and/or drugs is illegal.

Under the *Criminal Code of Canada*, it is an offence for someone to operate a vessel when their ability to do so is impaired by alcohol or drugs; or when their blood alcohol concentration (BAC) exceeds the legal federal limit of .08% (80 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood).

In addition to their driver's licence being suspended, individuals convicted of these offences face:

- \$1,000 fine for a first offence,
- At least 30 days imprisonment on a second offence;
- At least 120 days imprisonment on a third offence.

Many provinces and territories also have their own administrative impaired driving laws. Some jurisdictions, for example, have .05% BAC laws for drivers, and those laws may also apply to boaters. That means you may face suspension of your driver's licence and other sanctions if you operate your boat with a BAC of .05% or higher.



***Keep yourself, your passengers and everyone else
on the water safe.***