

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Harrisburg River Rescue &  
Emergency Services  
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**Harrisburg River Rescue Shares Boating and  
Social Distancing Tips for National Safe Boating Week,  
May 16-22, 2020**

Harrisburg, Pa (May 2020) –COVID-19 is forcing everyone to navigate uncharted waters, including boaters. For the annual celebration of National Safe Boating Week, held May 16-22, 2020, the National Safe Boating Council and Harrisburg River Rescue & Emergency Services, recommend boaters follow local guidance for social distancing and outdoor recreation.

“In many areas, the water is open, however, it’s more important than ever that boaters are responsible to limit unnecessary risk not only to themselves, but to other boaters, law enforcement, and first responders,” said Joe Ketterer, Public Information Officer, of Harrisburg River Rescue and Emergency Services.

U.S. Coast Guard statistics show that drowning was the reported cause of death in four out of every five recreational boating fatalities in 2018, and that 84 percent of those who drowned were not wearing life jackets. There are many U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets for different activities like boating, fishing, paddling or hunting.

"Life Jackets today come in a variety of shapes, sizes and colors. No matter which life jacket you choose, be sure it's right for YOU, your planned activities and the water conditions you expect to encounter" says Ketterer.

The Safe Boating Campaign offers these safety tips for boating and social distancing:

- Follow state and local guidance for outdoor recreation.
- Share a float plan with a family member or friend with the details of your trip in the event of an emergency.
- Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket.
- Carry all required boating safety equipment such as flares, navigation light, a horn or whistle, a first aid kit.

- Limit the people aboard your boat to people in your immediate household.
- Stay at least six feet away from other people who do not live in your house.
- Maintain safe distance at the fuel dock or loading up at the marina
- Wash hands frequently or use a hand sanitizer, such as after touching a marina gate or fuel pump.
- Don't raft up to other boaters or pull up onto a beach next to someone else as it could put you in close proximity to others.
- Go right from your house to the boat and back so that you don't have unnecessary contact with anyone.
- Pack food, water and other things you may need as restaurants and marina stores may not be open.
- Never boat under the influence.
- No distracted boating and travel at safe speeds.
- Have more than one communication device that works when wet.

Harrisburg River Rescue & Emergency Services is a self-sufficient non-profit, 100% volunteer organization that provides community-based, high quality, cost effective water rescue and emergency services for the residents of South Central Pennsylvania region since 1960.

To learn more about Harrisburg River Rescue & Emergency Services, visit our website at [www.harrisburgriverrescue.org](http://www.harrisburgriverrescue.org) or join us on Facebook

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