



COLD WATER BOATING

Hopefully, the ice has melted on the lake by now. We had 14-18 inches thickness during this winter's Polar Vortex. Although it should be good for our lake in keeping weeds under control, rest assured the water temperature may take some time to warm up.

Spring like temperatures will get some of our boaters an early start on the season. This is great to see the lake used and begin our boating season. However, we would like to caution our early boaters about being safe during this low boat traffic time.

Since the Marine Patrol and other boaters may not be around to readily assist, we offer these cold water boating tips from the U.S. Coast Guard.

- As a general rule, if the air and water temperature added together equal less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, you should take the following steps.
- Dress for the water temperature, not the air temperature. Having lots of layers on will help you survive if you do end up in the water.
- If you suddenly find yourself in the water, don't panic!
- Wear a lifejacket or better yet, a float coat. A float coat is a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal floatation device when worn. These are jackets or coats with built in floatation.
- Wear a hat. When in the water, 50% of your body heat is lost through your head. The hat will help slow down this heat loss.
- Wear synthetic fabric. Cotton will keep water next to your skin, pulling heat from your body. Synthetic fabrics such as nylon or polypropylene will help keep cold water off your skin.
- Cold water robs the body of heat 25-30 times faster than air. When you lose enough body heat to make your temperature subnormal, you become hypothermic.
- Any person pulled from cold water should be treated for hypothermia. Symptoms may include intense shivering, loss of coordination, mental confusion, cold and blue skin, weak pulse, irregular heartbeat, and enlarged pupils. Once shivering stops, core body temperature begins to drop critically. This is a life threatening emergency so call 9-1-1 to seek emergency medical assistance.

Since there may be few boaters on the lake during this time, boaters should look out for each other. Enjoy!

The Lake Mohawk Marine Patrol