

It's Summertime: CASA Encourages Keeping Summer Fun and Safe

Summer is a wonderful time for outdoor activities with family and friends. For many people, a day at the beach, on the boat, or at a backyard barbecue will include drinking alcoholic beverages. Manhasset CASA and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism remind adults that excessive drinking and summer activities don't mix. Excessive drinking will impair both physical and mental abilities, and also decreases inhibitions—which can lead to tragic consequences on the water, on the road, and in the great outdoors. In fact, research shows that half of all water recreation deaths of teens and adults involve the use of alcohol.

Swimmers Can Get In Over Their Heads

Alcohol impairs judgment and increases risk-taking, a dangerous combination for swimmers. Even experienced swimmers may venture out farther than they should and not be able to make it back to shore, or they may not notice how chilled they're getting and develop hypothermia. Surfers could become over-confident and try to ride a wave beyond their abilities. Even around a pool, too much alcohol can have deadly consequences. Inebriated divers may collide with the diving board, or dive where the water is too shallow.

Boaters Can Lose Their Bearings

According to research funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, alcohol may be involved in 60 percent of boating fatalities, including falling overboard. And a boat operator with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC)

over 0.1 percent is *16 times* more likely to be killed in a boating accident than an operator with zero BAC. According to the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Association of State Boating Law Administra-

tors, alcohol can impair a boater's judgment, balance, vision, and reaction time. It can also increase fatigue and susceptibility to the effects of cold-water immersion. And if problems arise, intoxicated

boaters are ill equipped to find solutions. For passengers, intoxication can lead to slips on deck, falls overboard, or accidents at the dock.

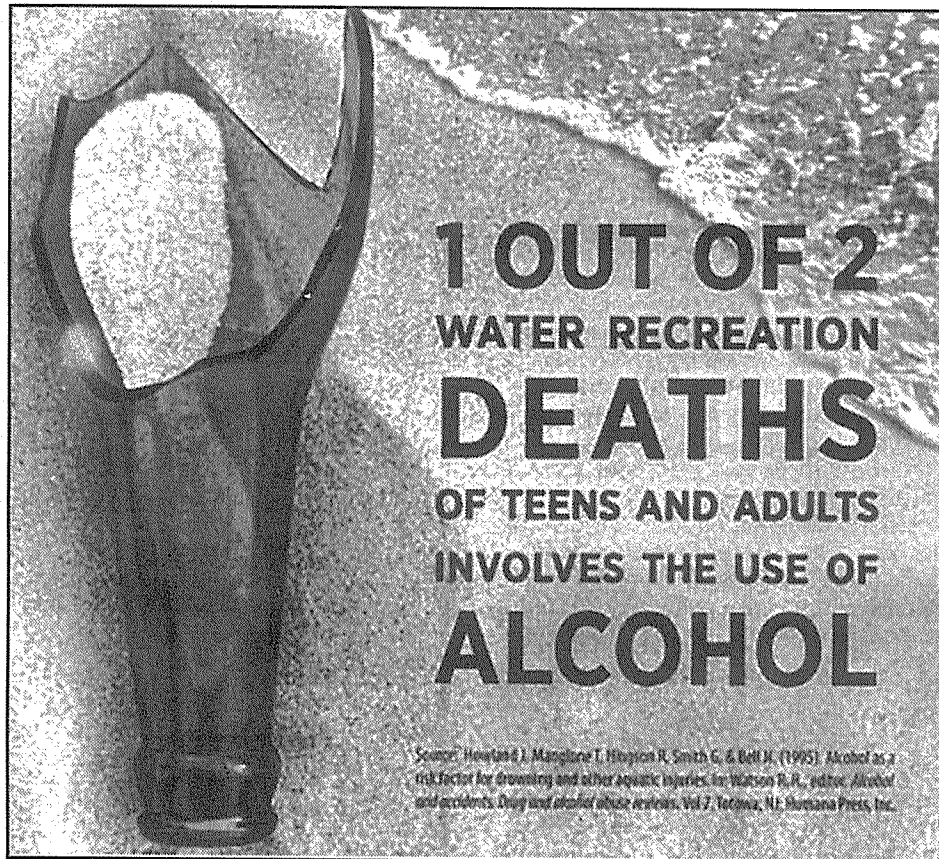
Stay Hydrated

Whether you're on the road or in the great outdoors, heat plus alcohol causes equal trouble. Hot summer days cause fluid loss through perspiration, while alcohol causes fluid loss through increased urination. Together, they can quickly lead to dehydration or heat stroke. But this doesn't have to happen. At parties, make at least every other drink a nonalcoholic one. If you're the host, be sure to provide plenty of cold, refreshing nonalcoholic drinks to keep your guests well hydrated. If you know you'll be driving, stay away from alcohol. And remember, there's no sharp corner in taking a cab or sleeping on a friend's couch if you feel at all unsure if you should be driving.

Summer Will End, But Consequences Can Endure

You can have fun in the sun and still be safe. Avoiding beverages that cause mental and physical impairment while piloting a boat, driving a car, exploring the wilderness, and swimming or surfing is a good place to start. Be smart this summer—think before you drink, and make sure that you and your loved ones will be around to enjoy many summers to come.

For more information on preventing problems with alcohol this summer, or tips on cutting back, visit <http://www.thinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov> or go to manhassetcasa.org.



Alcohol can impair a boater's judgment, balance, vision, and reaction time. It can increase fatigue and susceptibility to the effects of cold-water immersion. Sun, wind, noise, vibration, and motion – “stressors” common to the boating environment – intensify the effects of alcohol, drugs, and some medications (US Coast Guard: Operation Dry Water 2012)

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