



## Yuma County Sheriff's Office

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# PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Boating Enforcement and Safety

**Location of Incident:** Yuma County – Yuma, AZ

The summer season is upon us and with it comes an increase in activity on our waterways. For that reason, the Yuma County Sheriff's Office, along with other local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, will be increasing patrols on the lakes and waterways throughout the summer months.

The Sheriff's Office has already seen an increase in activity on our waterways from persons coming from out of state or county due to the current pandemic. At this time, the Yuma County waterways are still open to the public. The Sheriff's Office strongly recommends individuals continue to follow social distancing guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Public Health Department even while outdoors. Avoid gathering in groups of more than 10 people and remain at least 6 feet apart from each other.

Deputies will be actively working to enforce boating laws and conducting multiple details both on our waterways and throughout Yuma County during the summer months and the upcoming Memorial holiday weekend. Some of the behavior Deputies watch for on the water are reckless operation, bow riding, and other violations that risk operator and/or rider safety. Remember to use common sense when operating a boat or Jet Ski. This means operating at a safe speed at all times, especially in crowded areas. Be alert at all times; be respectful of buoys and other navigational aids, all of which have been placed there for one reason only—to ensure your own boating safety.

Avoid alcohol when operating a vessel. Operating a vessel while under the influence of alcohol or drugs could cause serious injury and even death to you or others. Practice boating safety at all times by saving the alcohol for later and having a designated sober operator/driver. The probability of being involved in a boating accident doubles when alcohol is involved.

Some of the most common boating violations observed are:

- Operating Under the Influence (OUI)
- Not enough life jackets (personal flotation devices) for everyone aboard the vessel
- Children 12 years of age or younger not wearing a life jacket (personal flotation device) while underway
- Excessive wake speed
- Reckless operation of a personal watercraft
- Riding on the bow, transom, or gunwales of a vessel operating above a wakeless speed
- Fire Extinguisher—lack of, non-marine type, and/or out of service
- No Type IV throw able personal flotation device on board

For more information regarding the Arizona boating laws and responsibilities, visit the Arizona Game & Fish Department website at [www.azgfd.com/Boating](http://www.azgfd.com/Boating) or to download the Boater's Handbook, visit [https://assets.kalkomey.com/boater/pdfs/handbook/az\\_handbook\\_entire.pdf](https://assets.kalkomey.com/boater/pdfs/handbook/az_handbook_entire.pdf)

**Information Released By:** Lt. Samuel Pavlak, Public Information Officer