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A Glimpse into the Role Alcohol Has on Water Safety

The Red Rock Regional Prevention Coordinator (RPC) would like to educate the community on the way alcohol can inhibit water activities. Alcohol slows reaction time and impairs judgment leading individuals to place themselves and/or others at risk. Alcohol affects almost every water activity, from swimming to boating and fishing.

Individuals should be responsible by limiting alcohol consumption or refrain from drinking alcohol completely. This includes parents, who should always stay sober when supervising children in or near water. Alcohol impairs body movement and coordination making staying afloat and driving water crafts extremely difficult. Operating a boat is similar to driving a car and a boating accident can be just as dangerous as an automobile accident. Yet many people who would never drive drunk think it's safe to operate their boat after drinking.

- 50% of all boating fatalities are alcohol related.
- In 2004-2006 alcohol was present in 30-70% of all recreational drowning's.
- Alcohol is a factor in approximately 17% of all boating drowning's.

According to National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, "each year, approximately 5,000 young people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking; this includes about 1,900 deaths from motor vehicle crashes, 1,600 as a result of homicides, 300 from suicide, as well as hundreds from other injuries such as falls, burns, and drowning." For this reason, underage drinking prevention strategies such as alcohol compliance checks are initiated throughout the state in hopes of reducing sales to minors that lead to death and injury. Operating a boat while intoxicated is illegal and dangerous. Enjoy the water and stay alcohol free.

Red Rock RPC's primary focus is to serve as a prevention community liaison. Red Rock RPC educates and informs communities through multiple strategies including community based services, environmental strategies, early recognition, and referral. We take the proactive

approach in reducing substance abuse among communities. Red Rock RPC is funded through the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. For more information about the Regional Prevention Coordinator please visit www.redrockrpc.com or contact the Red Rock RPC at (405)422-8873.