

Life jackets a safety necessity when boating on cold water



Men 20-60 years old least likely to wear life jacket, most likely to drown

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources wants to remind boaters that wearing a life jacket is a critical safety necessity during the spring "cold water" season.

While boaters should al-

ways wear a life jacket no matter the water temperature or season, public safety officials stress wearing a life jacket – not just having it on the boat – is the one action that significantly increases the chances of surviving a fall into cold water.

"The shock of falling into

cold water triggers your gasp reflex, which more than likely means inhaling water," said Lisa Dugan, DNR boating safety representative. "Wearing a life jacket gives you a fighting chance to get your head above water, stay calm instead of panicking, and call for help before hypothermia sets in."

Though air temperatures continue to rise, water temperatures statewide are still dangerously cold – cold enough to cause the gasp reflex and incapacitate even strong swimmers in less than one minute.

In Minnesota, more than 30 percent of boating fatalities occur on cold water, and accident records show the victims are disproportionately male.

"Over the past decade, we've seen a steady and troubling trend that indicates men between the ages of 20 and 60

are the most likely to drown while boating, and are the least likely to be wearing a life jacket," Dugan said.

"Cold-water drowning victims in Minnesota are also much more likely to be anglers than any other type of recreational boater. Add this up, and it's clear that if male anglers were to put their safety first and put on their life jackets, a significant percentage of boating deaths could easily be prevented."

More information is available at mndnr.gov/boating-safety.



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Alabama (Umbrella/Yumbrella) Rig not legal in MN



The tackle configuration known as the Alabama (Umbrella/Yumbrella) rig as it is commonly promoted is not legal in Minnesota waters. The rig pictured here is different than using a single lure with multiple treble hooks that is designed to catch just one fish.

Instead, the Alabama/Umbrella/Yumbrella rigs are artificial lure/baits that involve many separate lures/baits attached via wires to a fishing line. Consequently, these rigs are not a single artificial bait/lure, rather a collection of multiple artificial lures/baits each capable of catching a fish.

In the water, the rigs simulate a small school of baitfish

and YouTube videos show anglers catching two and even three largemouth bass on an Alabama/Umbrella/Yumbrella rig at the same time.

Minnesota law restricts anglers fishing in inland waters and the Canadian border waters to one artificial lure/bait on a single line. While each artificial lure/bait may have more than one hook (a crankbait, for example), only one lure or tackle configuration is allowed on a single line.

However, a Alabama (Umbrella/Yumbrella) would be legal if not more than one hook or artificial lure/bait is attached. An angler could place a single bait/lure with a hook on one of the wires and attach hookless spinners

or plastic baits to the other wires.

On border waters where two lines are allowed, anglers would not be allowed to fish with any other lines at the same time if two hooks, baits or lures are attached to these rigs.

Note: See the current fishing regulations for a description of legal tackle and configurations. Two lines and two lures/baits are allowed on our border waters with Wisconsin, Iowa and the Dakotas.

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