

PRESS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Division of Boating and Waterways | Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division | Office of Historic Preservation

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California State Parks Encourages Visitors to End Summer Safely this Labor Day Weekend

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Labor Day weekend unofficially marks the end of the summer, but for many outdoor enthusiasts it is another opportunity to enjoy a long weekend in the outdoors. Whether visitors plan on enjoying the outdoors in boats, bikes, horses, off-highway vehicles or surfing, camping, exploring the lakes or mountains, or simply enjoying time with friends and family, it is important to plan and learn about the parks they are visiting.

Below you will find helpful tips to stay safe during this Labor Day weekend:

- **Wear a Life Jacket:**
 - Water-related accidents can happen suddenly and rapidly. Make sure you and your loved ones wear properly fitting, U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets. Wearing them is the number one way to increase your chances of survival during an accident.
 - Several public and private entities make life jackets available to the public on a loan basis. [View Locations](#)
- **Protect Your Loved Ones:**
 - Supervise children at all times by appointing a designated “water watcher,” taking turns with other adults. Do not assume that someone is watching your children.
 - Know your limits. Swimming in a lake, ocean or river is different than swimming in a pool.
 - If someone is in distress, seek help from a lifeguard or call 9-1-1 if one is not available.
- **Avoid Alcohol:** Operating your boat or an off-highway vehicle with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08% or more is against the law. Impaired boaters will be stopped and can be arrested even with lower BAC if the conditions are not safe. Your boat can be impounded.

- **Ocean Rip Currents:** If you get caught in one, stay calm and do not fight the current. Swim or float parallel to the shore until you are out of the current and then swim toward the shore.
- **Trails:** Whether you are hiking, horseback riding or operating an off-highway vehicle, stay on designated trails. You are not only protecting natural resources, but you are also ensuring that you do not get lost.
- **Prepare an Itinerary:** No matter what type of recreation activity you will be participating in, leave an itinerary of your trip with a family member/friend with information such as name/age of all participants, travel destination and expected return date. This will ensure law enforcement personnel have a better understanding of your location in the event of a rescue.

Additional safety tips and information on laws can be found online at www.parks.ca.gov/safetytips.

With over 340 miles of coastline, 970 miles of lake and river frontage, 15,000 campsites, and 4,500 miles of trails, California State Parks contains the largest and most diverse recreational, natural, and cultural heritage holdings of any state agency in the nation with 280 state parks. More than 67 million people annually visit California's state park system. Invent your adventure online at www.parks.ca.gov.

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California State Parks provides for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation. Learn more at www.parks.ca.gov.

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