



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Walla Walla District

News Release

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Phone: (509) 527-7020

Corps stresses safety on Independence Day

WALLA WALLA, Wash. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stresses safety during the upcoming Independence Day holiday.

Many people enjoy water-based recreation as part of their Fourth of July celebration. Outdoors enthusiasts can enjoy scenic river views while taking advantage of picnicking, camping, fishing, boating and swimming opportunities. Unfortunately, some celebrations end tragically due to accidents in, on and around the water. The Corps offers a few safety tips to ensure a safer recreation experience over the Independence Day holiday and throughout the year.

Leave fireworks at home – using pyrotechnics poses a high risk of starting fires in parks and habitat areas, and are not allowed on Corps lands in the Walla Walla District. Recreation officials encourage visitors to attend local fireworks displays in communities near the parks.

Wear your life jacket – Each year about 6,000 people drown in the United States. This is the second leading cause of accidental deaths for persons 15 to 44 years of age. The majority of these tragedies could have been prevented by simply wearing a life jacket. Please do your friends and loved ones a favor – wear your lifejacket.

Learn to swim and don't overestimate your skill – Once you know how to swim, ensure that you always swim with a buddy. Don't rely on inner tubes or water toys to keep you afloat. Know your limits. Each year many people drown by overestimating their swimming skills and swimming beyond their limits.

Beware of cold water temperatures – Hypothermia is a condition where the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. This condition can occur in any season, especially in the Pacific Northwest, where water temperatures remain low all year.

Don't drink and boat – As many as 3,000 lives are lost each year due to alcohol related drowning. Just one beer can impair your balance, vision, judgment and reaction time, thus making you a potential danger to yourself and others. Don't include alcohol in your outing if you are planning to have fun in, on, or near the water.

For more information on these and other water safety tips please visit the Corps' water safety Web site at <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/safetytips.htm>.

For information about Corps recreation opportunities in the Walla Walla District, check out our Web site at www.nww.usace.army.mil; click on Recreation. Or, call the public affairs office at (509) 527-7020.

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Public Affairs Office, Walla Walla District Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 201 N. Third Ave, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

Phone (509) 527-7020 FAX (509) 527-7824

Website: www.nww.usace.army.mil

E-mail: cenww-pa@usace.army.mil