



Fresno County Sheriff's Department
Margaret Mims, Sheriff
News Release

April 21, 2009

Deputy Chris Curtice – Public Information Officer
Office 559.488.2699 Fax 559.262.4032
E-mail: christian.curtice@fresnosheriff.org

MEDIA ADVISORY: Sheriff Promotes Water Safety

Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims is reminding local fisherman and other recreational users of County waterways to use caution when in and around the water.

Varying water levels throughout the area are prompting the Sheriff Department's Boating Enforcement Unit to remind everyone to wear life jackets and follow other safety procedures when they are in, or near the water.

Department of Boating and Waterways statistics indicate that more than 80% of boating related deaths are from drowning-many of which might not have happened if the victims had worn life jackets.

In 2008, the Sheriff's Office responded to five drownings. Thus far this year, there has been one reported drowning.

The Sheriff's Department stresses the fact that life jackets are to be considered lifesaving aids and not substitutes for good swimming ability. A whistle attached to each life jacket is also useful for signaling help or getting attention.

Recreational water users are encouraged to ascertain water levels and conditions prior to swimming in, or launching vessels into County waterways. Water levels in the rivers can change from day to day as melting snow pack causes varying amounts of water to be released from the dams.

Anyone wishing to receive more information on boating or water safety presentations may contact the Sheriff's Office at 488-3111. The California State

Department of Boating and Waterways also provides online information and assistance at www.dbw.ca.gov.