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## More police to patrol lakes for July 4 holiday

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Marine divisions at sheriff's offices across metro Detroit plan to increase patrols over the Fourth of July weekend in anticipation of large crowds of cash-strapped residents flocking to area lakes and beaches.

Police are recommending using caution as inland lakes become congested, especially in light of recent accidents, including a fatal drowning at Haas Lake Park in New Hudson and a deadly boat crash on Lake St. Clair.

"I believe with the economy it keeps people at home," said Sgt. Matt Snyder of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office Marine Division. "I'm expecting to see more activity on the lakes."

Fireworks in lakeside communities also will draw large crowds and boaters, so Snyder said the division plans to send out upward of 25 patrol boats for the Fourth of July weekend, staffed heavier than normal.

Macomb County Sheriff's Lt. Brian Barlog said that the office's marine operation typically has three or four boats on the water on the weekends, but will likely have upward of six for the holiday weekend.

He said he hopes "everybody observes and obeys the rules of the waterway. ... Don't cut people off, don't get too close."

But the biggest no-no: alcohol.

"Designated drivers or operators, please," he said.

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## Additional Facts

Safe-boating tips

To stay safe on the water this Fourth of July weekend, keep these tips in mind:

- When boating, always have the proper equipment on board, including life jackets, life preservers in case someone falls over and a cell phone to use in case of emergency.
- Follow the rules of the waterway, including not driving too close to other watercrafts or cutting people off.

- Be aware of summer storms that can develop quickly.
- Make sure others know where you are before heading out on the water.
- Always swim with a buddy.
- Don't drink alcohol while driving a boat or swimming.

**Sources: Sheriff's offices in Oakland and Macomb counties**

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