

Where is your lifejacket?

Over the past couple of weeks, there have been a number of deaths reported on waterways and in many of these incidents, they could have been prevented provided one important piece of safety equipment was used.

Chief Superintendent John Tod, Regional Commander of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Central Region is asking all boaters to always wear a personal floatation device (PFD) or lifejacket when out on the water.

A life jacket stored somewhere on a boat will not help you if you somehow fall into the water or get knocked out of your boat. Safety is paramount when it comes to recreational activities on the water and the proper wearing of a PFD at all times will enhance surviving an unfortunate incident that may occur.

Marine officers on area lakes within the OPP Central Region take water safety very seriously and stop boats each and every day to make sure that the necessary and required equipment is present depending on the size of boat being operated. The law with regards to PFD's is simple; for every person on a boat, there must be a lifejacket. Failure to do so can result in a fine which starts at \$200. Deaths resulting from drowning are preventable and where safety equipment such as a PFD is available and not used is a selfish and selfless act that can negatively impact families and first responders.

The message from the OPP is simple, if you go out onto the water, please wear a PFD at all times as this could make a difference in your safe return to shore should you encounter a problem on the water. Water safety begins before you leave shore and ends when you have safely returned at the conclusion of your outing, adds Chief Superintendent Tod.