



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Mobile District

# News Release

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## ***PROTECT YOUR FAMILY WITH LIFE JACKETS***

**Mobile, Alabama** — What is the value of your life or that of your child? Is it worth buying and wearing a properly fitting life jacket when you play or fish in a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rivers or lakes?

Last year, 18 individuals drown in Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and Georgia river and lake projects managed by Mobile District. This year, seven fathers, sons and grandfathers have drown.

These fatalities didn't have to happen and could have been prevented if a few safety rules had been followed. It is probably a safe bet that none of these individuals expected to end up in the water.

If two fisherman would have taken a buddy along and worn a life jacket they may be alive today. Each went fishing alone and fell overboard. When the unoccupied boats were found, the life jackets were still onboard.

In two separate family boating incidents if the occupants would have taken the 60 seconds to put on a life jacket, buckle the clasps and adjust the straps or if they followed the "throw, don't go" rescue rule, they could still enjoy

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## **2-2-2-2 Protect your family**

family outings. In one incident, a child fell overboard without a life jacket and drown. In the other incident, a child fell overboard and was saved, but the rescuer drown.

Floating docks are often perceived as stable, but incidents this year prove that to be a false assumption. A drowning occurred when a fisherman fell off a floating dock as he reached for a fish he had reeled to the edge of the dock. Fishing with a friend or even wearing a life jacket could have saved his life. The second fatality of this nature happened at an underage drinking party when a teenager fell off a dock.

In the seventh incident of the year two men went out in an overloaded boat. Neither was wearing a life jacket when the boat capsized. One man made it to shore; the other didn't.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, encourages everyone to play safe and to boat safe in, on or near the water.

Remember: a child can drown in as few as 20 seconds; an adult in 60 seconds. It takes less than one minute to put on a life jacket, snap the clips and adjust the fit. If 25 individuals who drown in the last two years had taken a single moment to don a life jacket, they would be alive today.

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### **3-3-3-3 Protect your family**

For information on Lake Sidney Lanier or to request a water safety presentation, contact the Lanier Project Management Office at (770) 945-9531. To find the corps project nearest to you, visit [www.corplakes.usace.army.mil](http://www.corplakes.usace.army.mil).

### **SAFETY TIPS SIDEBAR**

#### **Boating Safety Tips**

Always wear a life jacket when you are on a boat.

Many male boaters who drown fell overboard while answering nature's call.

Most drowning victims knew how to swim, but did not intend to get in the water and could not reach their lifejackets in time.

Always boat sober.

Always boat with a friend

Use your running lights from dusk until dawn when you are on the water.

Always let someone on shore know where you plan to take the boat.

Check the weather before you put the boat in the water.

Know and follow the water "rules of the road."

Learn how to swim.

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### **4-4-4-4 Protect your family**

#### **Water Safety Tips**

Wear a life jacket, it could save your life.

Learn how to swim, but be aware that even good swimmers can drown. Know your limits.

Swim with a buddy.

Swim in designated areas only.

Use your head and go feet first into the water.

Leave the water at the first sign of bad weather.

Watch your children – no reading, no phone, no nap.