

Wear It Tennessee program promotes safety

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By Mike Lorance June 17, 2010

Anyone who has been outside lately finds that it is extremely hot.

This is the time of year when a lot of people start thinking about going to the lakes or the rivers. Water sports — including **fishing**, boating, swimming and anything else involved in water — are the place to be when it is this hot.

This is also especially the time to remember water safety. Each year, there are tremendous number of fishermen, swimmers and boaters who are killed in water-related accidents all over the United States.

These accidents are due to many things. One thing in particular is not wearing your life preserver.

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has come out with a program that would be beneficial to anyone who wants to preserve life and be sure they are safe. This program is Wear It Tennessee, and the Web site is WearItTennessee.com.

In this program, anyone who sees a Wear It Tennessee boat on an area lake or river should flag it down and sign a pledge to wear a life preserver all the time you are in the boat. You will be given a current high quality life preserver.

Betsy Woods is in charge of this program. Contact her at 615-781-6601 or Betsy.Woods@state.tn.us and she will be delighted to give you any information about this program.

Tennessee is ranked fifth in the United States in water-related deaths. That's really high, and it is time we did something about it.

Unfortunately, there was a **boating** accident last Thursday night on Percy Priest Lake involving two boats. This is a great example of why you should always wear a life preserver.

One boater was thrown into the lake, but he was wearing a life preserver. So, he was rescued without any problem.

The Wear It Tennessee program is designed for one reason — and that is to save lives. So, this is a reminder. Anytime you get into a boat, put a life preserver on and keep it on until you reach shore again.

Fishing on Percy Priest Lake has been tough for most fishermen. There are a few fish being taken, but not very many.

Fishermen report they are catching a few fish on spinner baits and worms at night in depths of water from 3 feet all the way out to about 15 feet deep. Daytime fishing early in the morning with top-water lures, crank baits and the Carolina rig has also been producing a few fish.

Tim Staley, the Ole Guide at Center Hill Lakes, reports fishing up there has been fair to good. He came in third place in the former Edd Rogers tournament this past weekend. It is now known as the Surf Master tournament.

Staley caught a little more than 17 pounds, using artificial worms, big jig and pork rind, and spinner baits.

He also reported that there are a lot of big bluegill being taken using crickets all up and down the lake. If you are looking for a lot of fun with a youngster, now is the time to go to Center Hill Lake.

With five fish totaling 15.99 pounds, Mylan Byrn and Larry Bennett won Mike's Sunday morning bass tournament held this past weekend on Percy Priest Lake out of Fate Sanders Marina. That total included the top two largemouths of 4.56 and 4.55 pounds.

Wally Ellis and Steve Harding finished second with 14.39 pounds (five fish), followed by Ira Boone in third place with 5.59 pounds (two fish). Joe Edmondson finished fourth with 4.89 pounds (two fish).

James Lorance and Ted Jackson won the Friday night bass tournament also held out of Fate Sanders Marina. They also had big largemouth of 4.73 pounds.

Rodney Marable and Johnny Matthews finished second with 8.52 pounds. Big smallmouth of 2.74 pounds was caught by Scott Cantrell and Dalton Cantrell.