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As water temperature dips, DNR urges caution for boaters 30 percent of boating deaths happen on cold water

As the days grow shorter and the water temperatures dip, the Department of Natural Resources urges hunters, anglers, paddlers and all boaters to use extreme caution, especially when venturing out in small boats.

People on small boats, such as canoes, kayaks, and fishing boats, should take extra precautions to prevent being suddenly thrown overboard, swamped or stranded in rough, cold waters.

"Cold water robs body heat 25 times faster than air of the same temperature," said Lt. Col. Greg Salo of the DNR's Enforcement Division. "Should you find yourself in the water, righting your canoe or small boat and climbing back aboard is extremely difficult in muscle-cramping cold water. It's best to not boat alone and to always wear a

life jacket."

Recent incidents have involved late season boaters ending up in the water after reaching over the side of the boat or small boats capsizing in rough conditions. Even with above average air temperatures it's important to keep in mind that the water is cold. Hypothermia and cold water shock can set in within minutes. Wearing a life jacket, at all times, while boating will increase chances of survival in cold water.

"In Minnesota, more than 30 percent of all boating fatalities happen in cold water with the victim not wearing a life jacket," said Lisa Dugan, DNR boat and water safety outreach coordinator. "Wearing a foam-insulated life jacket or float coat can help retain your body's core temperature and delay the

onset on hypothermia. Those wearing, not just carrying, a life jacket when exposed to cold water have the life-saving advantage of being able to keep their head above water, stay calm, and call for help before hypothermia sets in."

Know the risks of cold water boating and take the right precautions when boating in cold water.

At the very least, all boats must carry one U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket for each passenger. Wear it, don't just carry it.

Don't boat alone; boating safety increases with numbers.

Keep an eye on the sky, head to shore if wind gusts start to pick up.

If the boat capsizes or swamps, stay with the boat and try to re-board. Do not attempt to swim to shore.

No matter the season,

when on the water, life jackets should be worn. For more tips on staying safe in cold wa-

ter visit www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/boatwater/cold-water.html.

Landmark demolished



The former Temple Baptist Church on Oak Street in Brainerd was demolished on November 28. Reportedly, repairs were too expensive. Many have memories of attending Sunday school and church there. In 2011, the congregation moved to Laurel Street as *Communitas Church*. Garry Schwartz photo

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