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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Small Business, Red Tape Reduction and  
Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch  
The Community Against Preventable Injuries

### **Campaign reminds British Columbians that alcohol and boating don't mix**

VANCOUVER – As the first long weekend of the summer season arrives, BC Liquor Stores and The Community Against Preventable Injuries (Preventable) are joining forces to remind British Columbians about how dangerous prevailing attitudes around mixing alcohol with boating can be.

A joint campaign will see 15 marina ice coolers in high-traffic marinas around the province wrapped with an image of an overturned boat and the message: “If you think drinking and boating is a good mix, have a word with yourself.” Posters with this message will be featured in BC Liquor Stores throughout the province in July.

The goal of the campaign is to shift public attitudes toward drinking and boating. Drinking and boating is illegal, extremely dangerous and can lead to fines and/or imprisonment.

Many boaters are unaware that drink for drink, a boat operator becomes impaired twice as fast as someone drinking indoors due to various stress factors such as motion, sun, wind, temperature and glare. But it's not only boat operators who are at risk. Passengers drinking on board have an increased risk of drowning since alcohol reduces co-ordination and balance, and increases susceptibility to hypothermia. All passengers on a boat, regardless of its type, are advised to always wear an approved personal floatation device to reduce their risk of drowning.

In British Columbia, there are an average of 48 deaths per year due to water activities and of those, 42% are alcohol-related. An additional 160 people per year are hospitalized due to injuries from water activities.

Half of these deaths and hospitalizations take place in the summer months of June to August, which is why BC Liquor Stores and Preventable are partnering on this important campaign.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Coralee Oakes, Minister of Small Business, Red Tape Reduction and Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch –**

“As we approach what is considered the first long weekend of the summer, it's a perfect time to remind British Columbians to enjoy liquor responsibly. The last thing anyone wants is for a good time to turn tragic. This campaign, and others undertaken by the Liquor Distribution Branch and its partners, helps ensure we continue to keep public health and safety top of mind.”

**Mike Morris, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General –**

“Operating any vehicle while impaired by alcohol is not just a bad idea – it’s against the law, whether you’re on the water or the road. Keep in mind that the statistics related to drowning and hypothermia also account for alcohol-affected passengers. You don’t have to be at the tiller or the wheel to lose your life in a boating tragedy.”

**John Yap, Parliamentary Secretary for Liquor Policy Reform –**

“Protecting public health and safety is a critical part of our government’s efforts to modernize provincial liquor policy. The partnership we announced today with Preventable will go a long way to educating British Columbians about the importance of enjoying alcohol responsibly as we get outdoors with our friends and family this summer.”

**R. Blain Lawson, general manager and CEO, BC Liquor Distribution Branch –**

“Encouraging the responsible use of beverage alcohol is a core value of the BC Liquor Distribution Branch. By partnering with Preventable, we are discouraging our customers from engaging in high-risk behaviour on the water. Ultimately, we want British Columbians to enjoy the summer safely rather than not have the chance to enjoy it at all.”

**Dr. Ian Pike, spokesperson, Preventable –**

“This campaign encourages British Columbians to stop and think about their attitudes and behaviours before boating under the influence. It educates us on some of the staggering statistics and reminds us that drinking and boating don't mix.”

**Quick Facts:**

- The branded ice coolers will be located in the following areas: West Vancouver, False Creek, Victoria, Nanaimo, Hornby Island, Comox, Sidney, Surrey, South Pender Island, North Saanich, Ladysmith.
- The wraps will be in place between May 16 and Sept. 6, 2016.
- Alcohol is a depressant and slows sensory abilities. Increased alcohol consumption reduces depth perception, peripheral, colour and night vision, reaction time, balance and co-ordination, and comprehension and concentration.
- Impaired passengers are also a dangerous distraction, since they can cause a number of accidents including pushing other occupants overboard and throwing objects.

**Learn More:**

Factsheet on British Columbia’s commitment to protect health and public safety:

<http://ow.ly/uJtJe>

For more information on the public education campaign, visit: [www.preventable.ca](http://www.preventable.ca)

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