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“HIGH SEASON” FOR BOATING BRINGS HIGH RISK FOR DROWNINGS

PHOENIX, Ariz. (June 19, 2007) – All aboard! June launches Arizona’s “high season” for boating. Water Watchers at Phoenix Children’s Hospital warns against casting off water safety practices. Nationally, drownings increase 89 percent in summer months among children ages 14 and younger.

“As temperatures soar, Arizonans flock to the closest body of water they can find,” said Tiffany Isaacson, Water Safety Coordinator for Water Watchers at Phoenix Children’s Hospital. “Rivers and lakes are especially attractive, but the increased time spent on or near the water can mean an increased risk.”

Data collected by Water Watchers reveals a typical river or lake drowning victim is between five and 15 years-old. Rough currents, lack of life-vest use, and poor swimming skills are factors often leading to water fatalities.

As Valley residents head out to lakes and rivers, water safety vigilance is critical. To stay safe, families should practice the following tips:

- Eye to eye supervision is critical whenever children have access to water.
- All passengers on boats and personal watercraft should wear coast-guard approved life preservers.
- Alcohol and driving a boat or personal watercraft do not mix.
- Know CPR in case of an emergency.
- Stay to the right when driving your boat or personal watercraft. Look out for other boats at all times, and watch the location of the shore. Obey the “no wake zone” rules.
- Keep a flag on the boat, and hold it in the air when one of your passengers is in the water. Watch for other boats’ flags, and slow down when they are up.
- Ensure that your boat has proper safety equipment, including plenty of drinking water.
- Be aware of your location and how to direct emergency personnel to find you if an emergency occurs. Share this information with a friend or family member before you leave on a trip.

Additionally, adults can take a safe boating class from the Arizona State Game and Fish Department. Visit <http://www.gf.state.az.us/> for a list of available classes and times. Some insurance companies provide discounts upon class completion.

Phoenix Children’s Hospital is Arizona’s leader in pediatric care and is one of the 10 largest free-standing children’s hospitals in the nation. The most comprehensive array of pediatric specialists in the State practice at this one organization. The outstanding clinical expertise, as well as high patient volume, and an unwavering commitment to caring only for children, all contribute to Phoenix Children’s leadership position. For information about Phoenix Children’s, visit the Hospital’s website at www.phoenixchildrens.com.