



# Ensure you get summer off to a safe start

Experts offer important tips on how to ensure a safe and happy summer.

With summer quickly approaching, critical injury lawyer, John McLeish of McLeish Orlando LLP, is sharing his extensive experience helping people who have encountered accidents and injuries – in an effort to make Ontario roads and waterways safer this summer.

“We’ve seen it all... we have represented so many accident victims over the last 25 years that our understanding of what is avoidable can truly contribute to a safer environment for Canadians,” said McLeish. “Some accidents

are unavoidable, of course, but many are a result of carelessness – and we believe there are some obvious steps that can be taken to reduce the potential for tragic outcomes.”

McLeish believes that Canadians simply don’t pay attention to the most basic road rules – and he has too often seen the horrific results that distraction and carelessness can produce.

In addition, most vehicles today contain electronic equipment such as GPS devices, high-tech stereo systems and equipment containing display screens that require input in order to function. Using such devices and in-

putting data on display screens while driving also contribute to catastrophic collisions. So McLeish suggests setting your GPS in advance and making your music selections or video choices for the kids before heading off on the highway.

Canadians are also getting out on the water as the weather gets warmer – and boating safety is yet another area where McLeish Orlando’s experience has come into play. Standard safety tips such as monitoring the weather, inspecting the watercraft, wearing life jackets and keeping appropriate safety equipment on board will make any marine excursion safer.

Still one of the biggest issues on the water is boating under the influence of alcohol. “Did you know the effects of drinking while driving a boat present a higher risk to drivers and passengers than on the road?” says McLeish. “There is a false perception that drinking while boating is safer or somehow less dangerous. It’s actually the opposite, as extraneous factors contribute to make alcohol consumption more hazardous.”

According to the U.S. Coast Guard, the continual rocking motion, engine noise and vibration combined with direct exposure to sunlight can intensify impairment and result in an increased occurrence of boating accidents.

The Canadian Coast Guard reports that one third of boating fatalities are associated with alcohol, and studies have shown that approximately 90% of all drowning victims were not wearing a Personal Flotation Device (PFD). Analysis has

also shown that promoting the use of PFDs and the awareness of the effects of boating while under the influence of alcohol can lead to a significant decrease in fatality rates.

“To be safe and secure in any vehicle or boat, at any time, it’s essential to be focused on exactly what you’re doing and where you’re going. That means no cell phone use, no eating while driving, no excessive speed and 100 percent no alcohol. It may sound simple but it’s amazing how many people still try to drive a car or boat after a few drinks and don’t pay attention to signs or take weather conditions into consideration,” McLeish said.

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