



# OAKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## PUBLIC INFORMATION SHEET

**Michael J. Bouchard, Sheriff**

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### **April 23, 2008 – Spring Boating Mishaps – Maceday Lake**

A 17-year-old Waterford Township resident was attempting to launch his boat on Maceday Lake when he suddenly discovered the drain plug was not installed and the boat was taking on water. During a panicked attempt to recover the sinking boat, his vehicle and trailer accidentally rolled down the ramp into the water. The vehicle and trailer became submerged but the young man managed to swim to shore with no injuries. This unfortunate situation could have been worse considering the cold water. These types of spring mishaps involving overlooked missing drain plugs, fuel leaks and other safety equipment concerns are avoidable. Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard wishes to remind everyone to take their time and conduct a proper spring boating launch inspection prior to arriving at a boat ramp. Go to [www.oaklandsheriff.com](http://www.oaklandsheriff.com) under "safety tips" for a printable boating safety equipment check list.



## **May 18, 2008 – Near Drowning – Pontiac Lake – White Lake Township**

Two Waterford Township residents were fishing from a 14' aluminum 'Jon-boat' on Pontiac Lake when the weather quickly changed. A fast moving storm and high winds suddenly engulfed the small watercraft with three to five foot waves, capsizing the boat and throwing both occupants into the rough, cold water without PFD's. Due to the high winds, the couple was only able to locate one PFD which they attempted to share. They soon discovered that one PFD was not capable of keeping both on the surface of the water. The quick thinking 45-year-old, Gerald Rice, swam over to the capsized boat, disconnected the gas tank and used the gas tank as a floatation device.

Two adult bystanders borrowed a nearby resident's pontoon boat and went out to assist the victims from the 56 degree frigid water. They removed the victims from the water and helped them to shore. The couple was met on shore by the White Lake Fire Department.

*Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard and Mr. Gerald Rice wish to remind everyone to wear a PFD while on the water at all times and certainly at the first signs of trouble. Take the most direct path to the shore line and resist the urge to travel all the way to the location you launched the boat from.*

Operator/Owner – Mr. Gerald Rice, 3700 Elizabeth Lake Rd., Waterford, MI Phone: 248-872-7416