



**US Army Corps
of Engineers
Fort Worth District**

News Release

Release No: CESWF-PA-07-020 Contact: Judy Marsicano

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Corps of Engineers finds disturbing similarities in early season drownings

FORT WORTH, Texas – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fort Worth has noted that recent early-season drownings on Corps lakes have a lot in common.

“Since the start of 2007, five Texas fishermen have died in three separate boating accidents at our lakes,” said Colonel Christopher Martin, District Commander. “All three accidents were preventable, but more importantly, everyone could have survived had they worn their life jackets.”

Col. Martin reports that all three accidents involved fishermen in small boats, who either ventured out onto the open lake during extremely windy conditions, or were caught on the water by a fast-moving storm front. Making matters more dangerous, two of the vessels were flat-bottomed Jon boats powered only by trolling motors.

All five of these victims found themselves suddenly and unexpectedly in the cold, turbulent water. Three had no time to grab their life jackets to put them on. Two of the victims did not even have life jackets or other personal flotation devices on their boat. All three accidents happened close to the shoreline, which may have given the victims a false sense of security.

And, according to investigating authorities, alcohol was a factor in two of the three accidents.

“We hope that by calling attention to the circumstances of these incidents, we can persuade our visitors to think about the risks of water recreation, and to take actions and make decisions to minimize the dangers,” said Colonel Martin.

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Editor’s Note: Go to Fort Worth District’s website at www://swf.usace.army.mil to contact the lake office nearest you.