

CLIENTS LEAD THE  
EFFORT TO WARN  
OF DANGER

Richard McCune together with his clients have been for several years and continue to actively work with local and national print and electronic media to tell this story before any more tragic deaths occur. The media response has been tremendous and boaters and potential boaters from across the nation are becoming more aware of this danger. Millions have seen the stories involving our clients and attorneys on news programs such as ABC World News Tonight, Good Morning America and countless local network affiliates in major markets across the country. But, million of boaters and their guests have never even heard of this danger and every year there are carbon monoxide deaths on these boats. Clearly, much more must be done if these deaths are to stop.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) deaths behind these boats have taken place for over 20 years and the ski boat industry continues to be largely unresponsive and seemingly unconcerned with the mounting deaths and injuries occurring behind their boats.

Currently, McCune & Wright is representing three families who each tragically lost a child from Carbon Monoxide poisoning behind a family ski or recreational boat. These tragic and senseless deaths are continuing. All boaters and potential boaters must understand the ongoing fatal CO danger that exists at the back of these boats.

Carbon Monoxide is a major part of the exhaust fumes coming out of the rear ports of many types of pleasure craft, including the very popular “competition” ski or wakeboarding boats.

CO is deadly, known for years as the “silent killer.” Most people, however, think of this odorless, colorless and tasteless exhaust byproduct as only rendering its effect indoors or in enclosed, confined spaces. But, that is misinformation, deadly misinformation.

Carbon Monoxide enters the bloodstream through the lungs, blocking oxygen the body needs. Extended exposure to low concentrations or very brief exposure to high concentrations can kill. Early symptoms of CO poisoning include irritated eyes, headache, nausea, weakness and dizziness. While boating these symptoms are often confused with seasickness or intoxication.

On ski boats the highest concentrations of CO are found around the swim deck or swim step at the rear of these boats. Boaters, often children, frequent this area while the boat idles or is moving at low speed. Just inches underneath this swim platform are the exhaust ports that emit these deadly fumes.

ABOUT CO:  
THE SILENT KILLER

Richard McCune with several of his CO clients including, Mike and Amy Farr of El Dorado Hills, California, Marble and Doni Jones of Walla Walla, Washington and Max and Susan Reece of Salt Lake City, Utah, along with their families have worked tirelessly in their respective states in working their State Legislatures to pass boat carbon monoxide legislation. As a result of their efforts registered boat owners in California, Washington and Utah are now receiving important life-saving information through the yearly boat registration process about the CO dangers that exist on their boats through the exhaust being emitted.

One of the most popular boating activities, particularly for children and teenagers is known as “teak surfing” or “teak dragging.” Participants hold on to the swim deck, often made of teak wood, at the rear of the boat and are pulled through the water. Many ski boat enthusiasts view teak surfing and dragging as a safe activity because the propeller is located under the middle of the boat, making a propeller strike highly unlikely. In truth, the surfer’s head is inside an “air burble,” an area around the swim deck where CO accumulates in a pocket. Victims can be overcome by carbon monoxide in a few minutes or even a few seconds. Medical experts have stated that even as few as 2 gulps of the poisonous fumes can be fatal. The collaborative work of McCune & Wright and its clients heightened the public awareness of the carbon monoxide dangers of this activity.

**It is a major goal at McCune & Wright that current and future education and legislative of all boaters and future boaters will greatly reduce the tragic, senseless deaths occurring across our country.**

If you are aware of anyone who owns a pleasure boat with rear exhaust vents, please share with them the often unknown danger they are putting themselves, their friends or family in by occupying the rear swim platform or waters immediately behind the boat. Safety experts have urged boating and water enthusiasts not to occupy the swim platform or water within 20 feet directly behind the boat while the engine is on.

## CO LEGISLATION & AWARENESS

## TELL A FRIEND