



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mike Martucci

## Senator Martucci Teams up with Highland Supervisor Jeff Haas, Yulan Fire Department, Lander's River Trips and Sullivan County Officials to Promote Water Safety

MIKE MARTUCCI July 8, 2021

| ISSUE: **WATER SAFETY**



**Barryville, NY** – After a recent string of tragic drownings on the Delaware River, Senator Mike Martucci (R,C,I-SD 42), Town of Highland Supervisor Jeff Haas, Yulan Fire Department Assistant Chief Keith Blaut, Rick Lander of Lander's River Trips and Sullivan County Officials Sheriff Mike Schiff, County Clerk Russell Reeves and Chairman of the Legislature Robert Doherty have teamed up to promote water safety in a series of Public Service Announcement (PSA) videos posted to their social media pages. The PSA is a coordinated effort between state, county and town elected officials, first responders and private enterprise to remind those participating in any water activities, such as boating, canoeing, kayaking,

rafting, fishing or swimming to always wear a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD). They are encouraging the public to help raise awareness by watching and sharing the message.

The PSA comes as the latest drowning victim was recovered from the river Wednesday afternoon, bringing the total number of victims to 7 – a startling loss of life just 5 weeks into the summer recreational season. Most of the drownings are swimming related.

“The Delaware River is a natural treasure for all of us to enjoy. Sadly, we have been reminded of the dangers that exist when proper precautions are not taken. I strongly urge everyone, whether novice or expert, to be safe and responsible on the river,” **said Senator Mike Martucci**, whose senate district encompasses a nearly 60-mile long stretch of the Upper Delaware River from Long Eddy to the City of Port Jervis. “I would also like to thank and acknowledge our first responders who are actively patrolling and protecting those on the river. They are saving more lives that would otherwise be lost.”

“As a first responder and the Supervisor for one of our river towns, I see up close the beauty but also the dangers of this body of water. I want residents and people from all over to come here and experience what the river has to offer, but I want them to do so responsibly. Everyone is reminded to please wear your PFD when on the Delaware River,” **said Town of Highland Supervisor Jeff Haas**.

“Please wear your PFD while boating, rafting, fishing or swimming. More than anything else, it unequivocally saves lives,” **said Yulan Fire Department First Assistant Chief Keith Blaut**.

“I put thousands of people on the river each year and the number one thing we tell them is to wear a life jacket at all times. This is a hazardous river with sudden drop-offs throughout the corridor. Most drownings on the river are swimming related. Those who are not good swimmers should especially wear one, and even those who do not plan to swim should still always wear their life jackets,” **said Rick Lander of Lander’s River Trips**.

“There is one common denominator in almost all of these tragedies, just about everyone who drowned on the Delaware River was not wearing their PFD. Let’s be safe, not sorry. Make sure you wear a life jacket,” **said Sullivan County Sheriff Mike Schiff**.

“It seems like every day we’re responding to another drowning along the Delaware, which takes a tremendous toll not only on the families and friends of the victims but the first responders,” **said Sullivan County Legislature Chairman Robert A. Doherty**, whose district includes a significant swath of the river. “Mother Nature is merciless with people who don’t take the proper precautions, and when it comes to fast-moving water like the Delaware River, that means wearing a life jacket, no matter how good a swimmer you think you are.”

The Delaware River has strong currents, slippery surfaces and sharp drop-offs. The public is reminded and strongly urged to never attempt to swim across the river, against the current or alone. Always know your points on and off the river and let someone else know of your plans. Alcohol increases the risk of accident and death. Please consume responsibly or not at all.

The group again reminds everyone to please wear your life jacket or PFD. It can save your life

*Mike Martucci serves as the Senator for New York's 42nd State Senate District which comprises all of Sullivan County and parts of Orange, Ulster, and Delaware counties. He is the ranking member of the Senate Standing Committees on Disabilities and Commerce, Economic Development And Small Business.*

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