



Ministerial Statement

By

Senator, The Hon. Emily-Gail Dill, JP
Junior Minister of National Security

Summer Safety

July 03rd, 2024

Madam President, today I wish to encourage Senators and the members of the public to join forces with the Ministry of National Security and the Government as we aim to have a happy and safe summer. The sun is officially, as our forebears would say, “across the line”, and we are all excited to once again experience all that beautiful Bermuda has to offer during the summer. As the weather continues to warm up, I would like to provide a few key reminders, safety tips, and words of caution to help us navigate the season as we all spend more time outside.

Madam President, beaching and boating is a favorite summertime activity for many of us. In order to preserve safety, it is important that we exercise heightened caution when our outdoor activities take us near or on the water. Beachgoers are encouraged to heed the signage and advice given by the Department of Parks and our lifeguards. Parents are reminded to be particularly attentive to young children in and around the water; and older children should be taught good beach etiquette to ensure that beach days are safe and enjoyable for all beachgoers.

Madam President, the Royal Bermuda Regiment Coast Guard will provide full maritime coverage over the summer months. The boating public can expect to see the Coast Guard on frequent inshore patrols. I implore residents to respect the authority of the Coast Guard and I remind everyone that they have the power to issue tickets and arrest any individual suspected to be in contravention of the law.

Madam President, it is important that boat operators check their vessels before every trip by ensuring that safety equipment is functioning. Whenever boaters plan to be out on the water, they should make sure that someone on land knows where they are headed and when they can be expected to return. Boat operators should not allow their vessels to be occupied by more people than the safe capacity of the boat, and life preservers should be available for everyone on board. Taking these simple steps will allow boaters to truly relax, and be safe, on their “Sunday Fun Days”.

Madam President, speaking of boating, I want to remind boaters and watercraft operators to control their vessels responsibly and without the impairment of drugs or alcohol. We all know that operating a vessel requires skill and that one must pay attention to what is going on out on the water. I implore boat operators to be responsible and moderate their consumption of alcohol while in control of any marine vessel.

Madam President, just as I am asking the public to exercise caution on the water, I also want to remind us to be cautious as we travel on the road.

Summertime in Bermuda means an increase in social gatherings, and an increased amount of people traveling on our roads, including our beloved tourists, and returning university students. We are all aware of the devastating effects of drunk driving. Alcohol impairs our ability to safely operate vehicles and increases the danger to other road users. Accidents involving serious property and personal injury can, and do, occur.

Madam President, I encourage people to enjoy their social gatherings and activities but, please, do not drink and drive.

Madam President, the Bermuda Police Service will continue with their road-side sobriety testing programme. Motorists can expect to be stopped along their journey and questioned on their alcohol intake by the police. To avoid the legal consequences of drinking and driving, please use a designated driver, taxi, or other prearranged transportation for your travels.

Madam President, my final cautionary message today is one of personal responsibility. It is hot outside, and hotter temperatures can sometimes mean hot heads and short tempers, particularly when alcohol consumption is involved. It is the personal responsibility of each of us to ensure that we do not allow a small annoyance to inflate into an incident of life changing domestic violence or anti-social behavior. As we move about and participate in the liveliness of the summer season, I encourage us to promote the friendliness and respectfulness for which Bermuda is known.

Madam President, it is my hope that this summer will be memorable for us for all the right reasons. I look forward to our people thoroughly enjoying County Games, Cup Match, beach parties and barbeques, family gatherings in the parks and beaches, camping, outdoor concerts, and all those activities we like to do during the summer. Let us make this summer one of watching our children master new skills, spending quality time with our loved ones, and exploring all that our island home has to offer. Let us do all this with a mindset of individual responsibility and safety.

Madam President, we must all work together to keep Bermuda safe over the summer.

Thank you, **Madam President.**