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Crowds expected on Upstate lakes this weekend

Water safety emphasized for busy Labor Day weekend

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Pleasant weather and a long holiday weekend are expected to bring crowds to Upstate lakes over the next few days.

There is a very low chance of showers in the lake area Saturday and a 20-25 percent chance of rain Sunday and Monday, according to the National Weather Service.

High temperatures should be in the mid 80s across the Upstate Saturday and Sunday and low 80s Monday.

Holiday weekends always bring more people to the lakes, said Sandra Magee, a Duke Energy spokeswoman. All Duke recreation areas on lakes Jocassee and Keowee "will be open and busy."

Magee advises people to "be safe, be careful and slow down," to have a safe weekend. "People need to park legally and watch out for one another."

Capt. Larry Holbrooks, of the state Department of Natural Resources, said enforcement officers will be on the lakes and courtesy boat inspections will be offered through the weekend.

Lake Hartwell is about six feet low and boaters need to be observant for underwater obstacles such as stumps and shoals and keep a lookout for other boaters, Holbrooks said.

Recent dry weather has the lakes on a downward trend, said Doug Outlaw, meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

The state's Drought Response team put the Upstate back in drought status on Wednesday.

Wear a life jacket if you are on, in or near the water, said Billy Birdwell, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers spokesman.

All Corps lake recreation areas will be open. Martin Creek access area in Oconee County will close Tuesday for about a week for repaving.

On Sunday, residents and visitors can enjoy live music and fireworks at the 11th annual Celebrate Anderson.

The event is free and open to the public at the William A. Floyd Amphitheater inside the Anderson Sports and Entertainment Center.

Gates will open at 6 p.m. and the concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. and will end with patriotic music and one of South Carolina's largest annual fireworks shows.

The Greater Anderson Musical Arts Consortium (GAMAC) orchestra will perform under the direction of conductor R. Alexander Spainhour III, with a guest performance by Celtic rock band, Seven Nations.

Picnic baskets are welcome. Guests are encouraged to bring their blankets and lawn chairs. Concessions, featuring food and beverages, will also be available for purchase. No glass containers, tents or pets are allowed.