

2006 Minnesota Boating Guide Contents

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LICENSING YOUR BOAT

WHAT MUST BE LICENSED

All motorized and non-motorized watercraft must be licensed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The types of watercraft that must be licensed include, but are not limited to, motorboats, rowboats, sailboats, sailboards, canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, rowing shells or sculls, all-terrain vehicles used in the water, and inflatable craft.

Exceptions to this law are as follows:

1. Watercraft currently registered in another state and not kept in Minnesota for more than 90 consecutive days.
2. Watercraft from a country other than the United States and not kept in Minnesota for more than 90 consecutive days.
3. Watercraft owned by the United States government, except those used for recreational purposes.
4. Watercraft documented with the United States Coast Guard. (Note: Documentation is a process where official papers on craft five net tons or larger are issued by the Coast Guard instead of state registration.)
5. A ship's lifeboat.
6. Duck boats during the duck hunting season, rice boats during the harvest season and seaplanes.
7. Non-motorized watercraft nine feet in length or less.

Unless a license is issued and in effect, it's against the law to operate or permit the operation of any watercraft which requires a license.

LICENSE PROCEDURES AND FEES

Register your watercraft in person at any deputy registrar of motor vehicles (where you license your car); at the DNR License Center in St. Paul (address at the end of this booklet) or do renewals online at www.wildlifelicense.com/mn/. When you register your boat, know its length, manufacturer, type of hull material (wood, metal, or plastic), type of propulsion, model, year, serial or hull identification number (HIN) and have a sales receipt that shows you have paid the sales tax.

HULL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

A hull identification number (HIN) or serial number is vital in registering and titling your boat. It is also important to recovery if your boat is stolen or if there is a recall campaign by the manufacturer.

HINs can be found on all boats manufactured since model year 1973. They are a letter-number combination usually about 12-17 digits long (example: ABC12345L402) and are usually found on the right side of the stern or transom of the craft on the outside. They may be stamped into the fiberglass or aluminum, or be on a separate plate. Location may vary slightly on pontoon boats, personal watercraft, kayaks, canoes etc. On boats built before November 1972 there should be a shorter serial number somewhere on the craft.



***Hull Identification
Number - usually
found on stern***

Length is the straight-line distance from the foremost part of the boat (bow) to the rearmost part of the boat (stern). Bowsprits, outboard motor brackets, rudders and other attachments are not included in the measurement.

Watercraft licenses cover a period of three calendar years and expire on December 31 of the last year the license is valid. The expiration date appears on both the license certificate and on the validation decals which are applied to the boat.

LICENSE CERTIFICATE AND NUMBERING

If you apply for a new boat registration or renew an existing one in person at a deputy registrar (any place you get your auto license) or the DNR License Center, you will receive your boat license decal and registration card on the spot. If you apply through the mail, it will probably take several weeks before you receive your decal and card.

Sign your license and keep it on board when you use it. If you are operating a non-motorized canoe, kayak, rowing shell, paddle boat, sailboard or sailboat you don't have to carry the license with you. However, if an enforcement officer asks to see it, you must produce it within a reasonable time.

The owner of rented watercraft may keep the license certificate at the place the boat is rented from. The name of the rental business must be printed on both sides of the rear half of the watercraft in letters at least three inches high.

The number issued to your boat appears on the license. Except for non-motorized canoes, kayaks, rowing shells, paddle boats, sailboards and sailboats, this number must be displayed on the forward half of the hull on each side of the craft (see illustration on page 8). The letters and numerals must be at least three inches high, of a block character, and contrast with the background. They can

Fees for Watercraft Registration and Titling

Type and Length	3 Yr. Fee	Exotic Species Surcharge	ELS Fee per Transaction	Filing Fee 	Total Cost
Watercraft owned by non-profit organization and used substantially to teach water safety (camp, Boy Scouts, etc.)	\$4.50	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$18.00
Rental or lease watercraft up to and including 19 feet (Rental watercraft over 19 feet same as pleasure craft)	\$9.00	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$22.50
Canoes, kayaks, sailboats, sailboards, paddle boats, and rowing shells up to and including 19 feet (Those over 19 feet same as pleasure craft)	\$10.50	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$24.00
Pleasure watercraft less than 17 feet	\$18.00	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$31.50
Pleasure watercraft 17-19 feet	\$27.00	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$40.50
Pleasure watercraft over 19 feet but less than 26 feet	\$45.00	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$58.50

Pleasure watercraft 26 feet but less than 40 feet	\$67.50	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$81.00
Pleasure watercraft 40 feet and over	\$90.00	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$103.50
Personal watercraft, rental or personal Dealer's license, regardless of the number of watercraft owned by the dealer	\$37.50	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$51.00
Any watercraft more than 19 feet in length for hire with an operator	\$75.00	\$5.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$88.50
Transfer of registered boat without renewal	\$4.50	\$0.00	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$13.00
Watercraft Title (see page 12)	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7.00	\$22.00
Duplicate Title	\$4.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7.00	\$11.00
Transfer Title	\$10.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7.00	\$17.00
Duplicate Registration Card	\$4.50	\$0.00	\$1.50	\$4.50	\$10.50
Duplicate Decal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1.50	\$4.50	\$6.00

 For each title transaction, new registration or any transaction involving a transfer, the filing fee is \$7.00.
For each renewal or duplicate registration transaction, the filing fee is \$4.50.

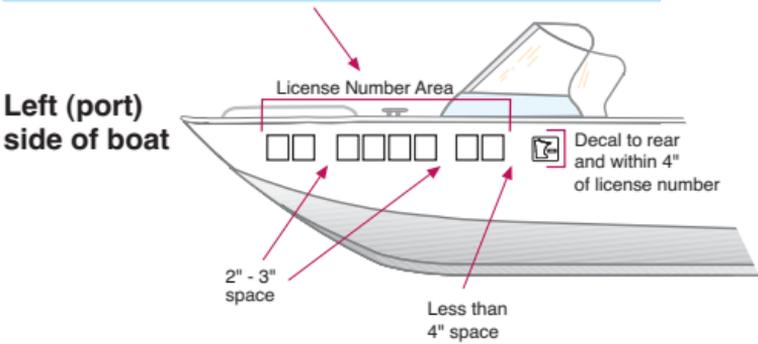
be painted or attached to the craft. They should read from left to right and must always be legible.

Before applying decals or numbers, on the watercraft, make sure the surface is free of dirt, grease, water, oil and wax. When you place your number on your boat, leave a 2 to 3 inch space - or provide a hyphen - between the MN and the four-digit number. Leave another 2 to 3 inch space or hyphen between the number and the two letters which follow. Place the validation decal to the stern or rear of the license number within four inches of the license number (see illustration below). **Remember, only the current decal must be visible. Remove the expired decals first, before applying the new ones.**

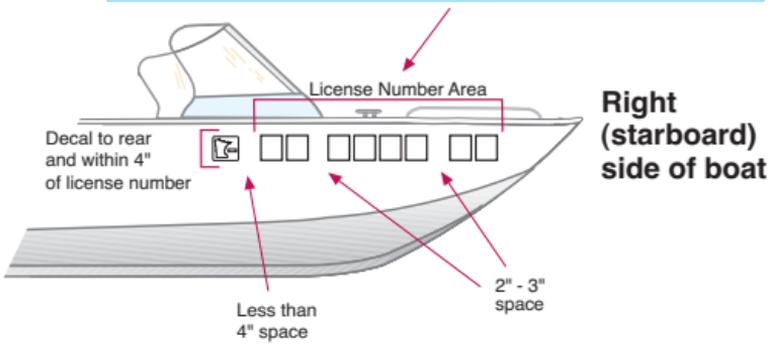
Correct placement of license numbers and decals

The license number which appears on your watercraft license card must be displayed on your boat as shown below.

License Number at least 3" high letters 3" { MN 1234 AB 



License Number at least 3" high letters 3" {  MN 1234 AB

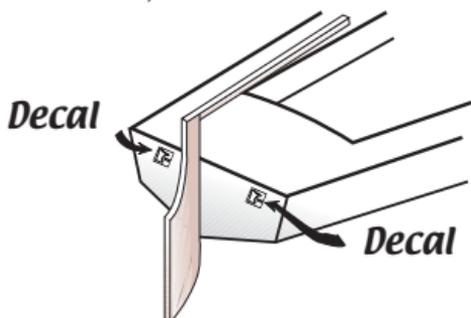


No other number, letter, or design may appear within 24 inches of the license number or decal.

The license number issued to your craft appears on the decal and on the card. If your canoe, kayak, rowing shell, paddle boat, sailboard or sailboat doesn't have a motor, **place the decal on each side of the forward half of the craft**. No three-inch numbers are necessary (see illustration below).

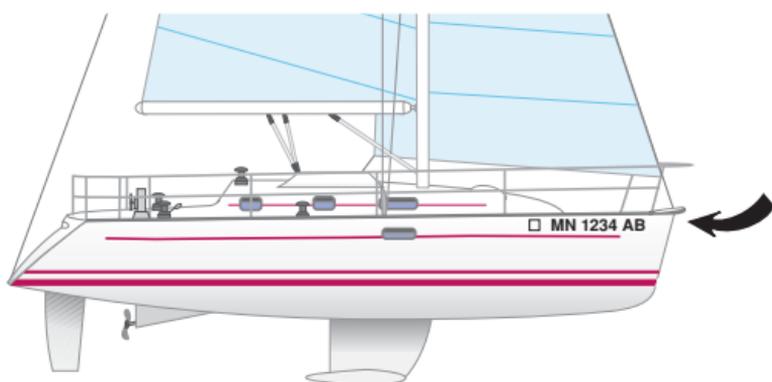
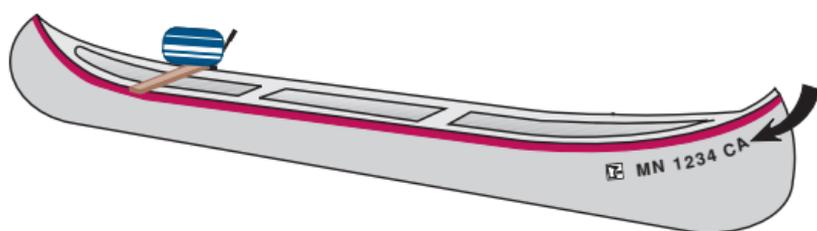


On sailboards and sailboats, you may also place the decals on the stern if it is impossible, because of the boat's design, to place them on the bow (see illustration below).



If your canoe or sailboat is motorized, affix the three-inch letters and numbers as previously described for other motorized craft. The square decal should be placed to the stern or to the rear of the number (see illustration below).

Correct placement of license numbers and decals for motorized canoes and sailboats



EXPIRATION AND RENEWAL

All watercraft licenses expire on December 31 of the last year the license is valid. Normally, you will receive a notice by mail to renew your license for another three-year period. But whether you are notified or not, you are responsible for renewing the license for your watercraft.

When you obtain your new license certificate and validation decals, discard your old license certificate and replace the expired decals on your boat with the new ones. **Remember, only the current set of decals must be showing!**

DUPLICATE LICENSES

Need a duplicate license? Stop by your local deputy registrar of motor vehicle office or the DNR License Center. To apply by mail, write to the DNR License Center and ask for it. Be sure to sign your name on the letter and include the registration number, description of the boat and the hull identification number (HIN). The fee for a duplicate license is listed on the watercraft license fee chart.

TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

If you buy a boat that is currently licensed in Minnesota, obtain the current license certificate from the previous owner. Send or deliver it, along with an application for transfer and the transfer fee listed on the fee chart, to the DNR License Center or deputy registrar. Transfer applications must be made within 15 days after the transfer actually occurs. The transferred registration is valid only for the time remaining on the previous owner's registration. Then you must renew your license.

DESTROYING OR ABANDONING YOUR BOAT

If you destroy or abandon your watercraft - or if you license it in another state - notify the License Center within 15 days.

DEALER'S LICENSE

Boat and motor dealers, wholesalers and manufacturers may apply for a dealer's license for watercraft used for demonstration purposes or for any other purpose necessary to conduct business. A dealer will be issued only one number. This number must be displayed on both sides of boats used for these purposes, however, and may be detachable.

COLLECTOR WATERCRAFT

Watercraft that were built before July 1, 1959, and are used solely as a collector's item, have the option of displaying the boat registration number and current decal on the forward half of the boat on both sides on a detachable plate or board. The number size, type and decal placement is the same as noted on pages 5-10 of this guide.

WATERCRAFT TITLING

As a safeguard for boat owners, the 1989 Minnesota Legislature created a law which requires the titling of certain watercraft.

A watercraft title provides proof of ownership, which becomes very important when buying or selling a boat.

A title also protects businesses that make boat loans, and aids in the recovery of stolen watercraft.

To determine whether or not your boat needs to be titled, review the check list on the following page.

If your boat matches any of the descriptions below, it **DOES NOT need to be titled. My boat:**

- Is registered in another state and is never used in Minnesota for over 90 days at a time.*
- Was manufactured before August 1, 1979.*
- Is 16 feet or less in length.*
- Is a rowboat with oar locks and an outboard motor rating of less than 40 HP.*
- Is a canoe, kayak, ship's lifeboat or seaplane.*
- Is a documented vessel (documentation is a process where official papers are issued by the Coast Guard on boats of 5 net tons or larger).*
- Is owned by a manufacturer or dealer and is held for sale.*
- Is used by a manufacturer for testing purposes only.*
- Is a duck boat used only in season for duck hunting.*
- Is a rice boat used only in season for ricing.*
- Is owned by a resort or recreational camping area which is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health.*
- Is a rowing shell or scull (not an ordinary rowboat).*
- Is owned by the United States, a state, this state, or a political subdivision.*

If you didn't check off any of the above conditions, you **do** need to title your boat.

If you need to title your boat, or aren't sure if it needs to be titled, contact any deputy registrar of motor vehicles office or the Department of Natural Resources License Center for more information.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES (Life Jackets)

There are five types of personal flotation devices (PFDs or life jackets) approved for use on recreational boats:



Type I — Off-Shore Life Jacket. This is a vest or yoke type device generally found on commercial craft. It is designed to turn most unconscious persons from a face downward to a face up position in the water.

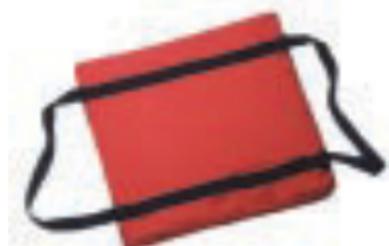
Type II — Near-Shore Buoyant Vest. The buoyant vest usually looks like a horse collar and is worn like a bib. It has an unconscious turning ability similar to the Type I, but it will not turn as many persons under the same conditions.

TYPE III



Type III — Flotation Aid. These devices are usually foam-filled and come in several colors and styles, including full-sleeved jackets. Type III devices are not designed to turn an unconscious victim, but they do provide protection for immersion hypothermia (exposure to cold water).

TYPE IV



Type IV — Throwable Devices. (Buoyant Cushion, Ring Buoy or Horseshoe Buoy) These devices are designed to be thrown to a victim in the water, rather than worn. Cushions especially should be checked often to see if they are in serviceable condition.

TYPE V

Type V — Special Use Devices. These are designed and approved for restricted uses such as a sailboarding harness, duck hunting flotation coveralls, or a whitewater rafting vest. This type of flotation device is restricted to the particular activity for which it was designed. The label will indicate any restrictions that apply to the particular device. Some Type Vs such as the “Hybrid PFD” must be worn to be counted in the total number of PFDs on board your boat.



INFLATABLE



Inflatable Life Jackets — NEW! Although inflatable PFDs have been available for many years, the U.S. Coast Guard only recently granted approval for several makes and models of inflatable PFDs. The inflatable PFD has the advantage of being very comfortable and easy to wear. Once inflated, the flotation is equal to or greater than traditional life jackets. Inflatables are not intended for use on personal watercraft, by children, or while water skiing or similar sports. Before purchasing, make sure that “U.S. Coast Guard Approved” is visible somewhere on the package or on the device itself.

Life Jacket Requirements

The following personal flotation device (PFD) requirements are effective for all waters within and bordering Minnesota. As of May 6, 2005, there is a state law requiring all children less than 10 years old to wear a life jacket on board all boats, with some exceptions. See page 18 for more information.

The requirements for PFDs are as follows:

On all boats (except a sailboard) regardless of length (including canoes, kayaks and duck boats), there must be a readily accessible U.S. Coast Guard approved Type I, II, III or V wearable PFD (life jacket) for each person on board. **Type IV throwable de-**

vices, such as buoyant cushions, are no longer acceptable primary lifesaving devices.

IN ADDITION, on boats 16 feet or longer (except canoes and kayaks,) there must also be at least one U.S. Coast Guard approved Type IV throwable device, such as a buoyant cushion or ring buoy immediately available for each boat.

The law does not state that PFDs must be worn, only that they are readily accessible **except for personal watercraft (water scooters, Jet Skis, etc.)**. **HOWEVER...** we highly recommend that PFDs always be worn by everyone on board any boat.

Check the label on the PFD to make sure it is a U.S. Coast Guard approved flotation device and what type of device it is.

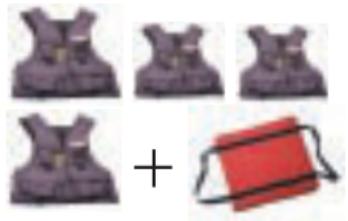
Less than 16 feet or any size canoe or kayak



One life jacket per person



16 feet or longer except canoes and kayaks



PLEASE NOTE:

- ★ Readily accessible - means easily retrievable within a reasonable amount of time in an emergency. PFDs in plastic bags, locked lockers, or under anchors or line are examples of PFDs that are **not** accessible.
- ★ Immediately available - means Type IV throwable devices must be easily reached in time of an emergency by someone on board the boat. Generally this means they will be in the open and not in a container.
- ★ A U.S. Coast Guard approval label must be printed on or attached to the device, and you must follow all restrictions on it.
- ★ All life preservers must be in serviceable condition. That means that the PFD must be free of tears, rot, punctures and water-logging (especially on kapok devices) and that all the straps are present and in good shape.
- ★ A U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD must be worn by a person being towed on water skis or other device, or carried in the towing watercraft.
- ★ A U.S. Coast Guard approved Type V device may be substituted for any other approved device if it meets the same requirements and is noted on the Type V device (i.e. "Equivalent to an approved Type III device").
- ★ Anyone operating or riding on a personal watercraft (water scooter, Jet Ski, Wave Runner, etc.) must **WEAR** a U.S. Coast Guard approved Type I, II, III, or V PFD.
- ★ **Mandatory Child Life Jacket Wear Law:** As of May 6, 2005, Minnesota law requires a life jacket to be worn by children less than 10 years old when aboard any watercraft while underway. Underway means not attached to a permanent mooring or tied to a

dock. There are exceptions to the wear law for:

- (1) children who are below the top deck or in an enclosed cabin,
- (2) children aboard passenger vessels being operated by a licensed captain,
- (3) children engaged in swimming or diving activities from an anchored boat.

NOTE: The federal child PFD wear regulation now automatically adopts this state law as the standard for ALL waters in Minnesota.

NAVIGATION LIGHTS

Navigation lights must be on from sunset to sunrise (see sunrise/sunset schedule at end of booklet).

★ **Non-motorized Boats** (see illustration below).

All non-motorized watercraft whether underway or at anchor must carry a white lantern or flashlight. This light should be strong enough so that other boats can see it from around the horizon at a distance of two miles or more.

The light must be displayed in sufficient time to avoid a collision with another watercraft.

(Note: Motorized canoes, kayaks, and sailboats must follow the light rules for motorboats.)

A white portable light shown in time to avoid collision



★ **Motorboats.** Most motorboats 16 feet or more in length will be equipped with the correct navigation lights by the manufacturer. In any

case, the lights must be displayed according to the state rules described below or under the current federal regulations.

★ **Visibility Rules.** White lights must be visible for two miles on a dark, clear night (with one exception under the International Rules). Combination or side lights must be visible for one mile.

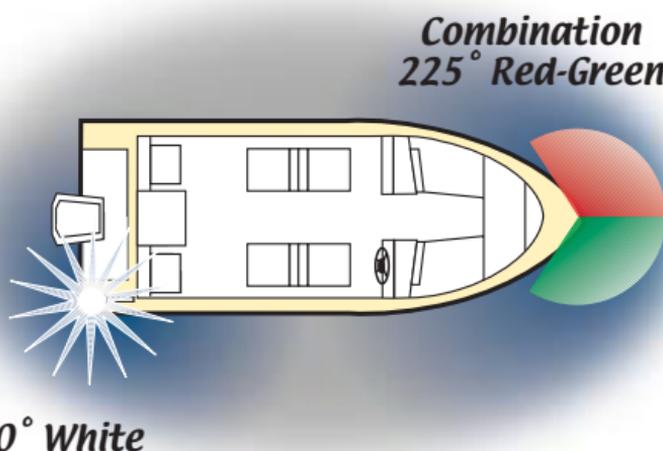
Combination or side lights must shine red to port (left side) and green to starboard (right side). They must be attached so the light shows from directly ahead to 22.5° to the rear of the beam (midpoint of the boat) on the respective side. Lights may be detachable and need only be displayed from sunset to sunrise.

★ **Lighting Tips.** If you can see the red light on a motorboat – give it the right-of-way – see page 28. Also, check your light sockets and wiring often – they can corrode over time.

Option A

When underway, motorboats less than 40 feet long display (see diagram below):

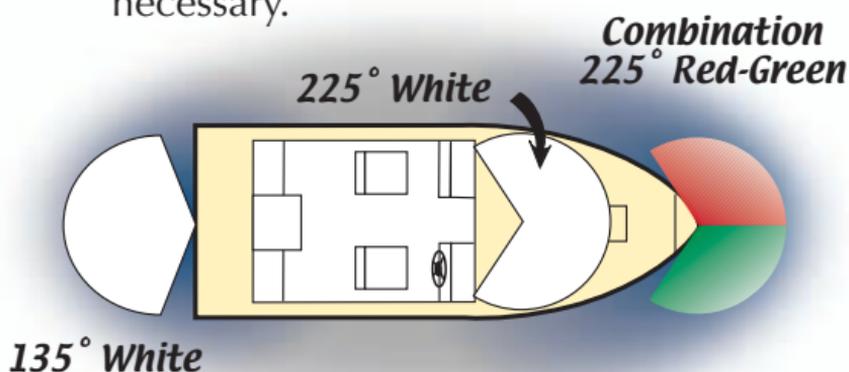
- (1) A 225° combination red and green bow (front) light.
- (2) A 360° white stern (rear) light. When at anchor, only the 360° white light is necessary.



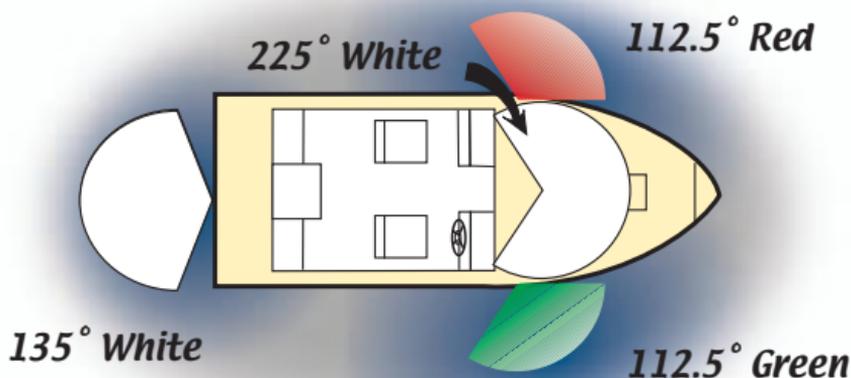
Option B

Motorboats 65 feet or less, when underway, display (see diagram below):

- (1) Either separate 112.5° red and green side lights **or** a combination 225° red and green bow light.
- (2) A 225° white light on the forward half of the boat, placed at least three feet above the red-green lights, showing 112.5° to each side and visible for three miles. On boats 40 to 65 feet long, this light must be at least nine feet above the gunwale.
- (3) A 135° white light on the stern half of the craft showing 67.5° to each side. This light may be carried off the center line. When at anchor, only one 360° white light is necessary.



OR





FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

All fire extinguishers must be U.S. Coast Guard approved, fully charged, and readily accessible.

- ★ When looking for an extinguisher at a store or marine dealer, it is important to look for the words “U.S. Coast Guard Approved” right on the carton.
- ★ Although two sizes of extinguishers are approved for recreational craft (B-I or B-II), most extinguishers on the market will be B-I. The words “Marine Type USCG Type BC-Size I” will be in small letters right on the extinguisher’s label along with the approval number. The letter “B” means the extinguisher will put out flammable liquid fires. The letter “C” means it can also be used for electrical fires.
- ★ Fire extinguishers are a good idea on any boat where fuel is used or carried. They are required as follows:

Boat Size	Fire Extinguisher(s) Required*
< 26' with enclosed engine or fuel tank**	1 size B-I
26' < 40'	2 size B-I <u>or</u> 1 size B-II
40' - 65'	3 size B-I <u>or</u> 1 size B-II & 1 size B-I
> 65'	3 size B-II

* When a motorboat is equipped with a U.S. Coast Guard approved fixed fire extinguishing system in the engine compartment, one less B-I extinguisher is required.

** Enclosed engines and fuel tanks are generally found on inboards, stern drives and on larger outboard boats with built-in fuel tanks. Most open outboard fishing boats, which use a portable fuel tank that is in the open, are not required to carry fire extinguishers.

VENTILATION

Motorboats carrying or using any fuel that has a flashpoint of 110°F or less (like gasoline) in any compartment must be equipped with an efficient ventilating system to remove combustible gases. This system must consist of at least one intake duct that extends from the deck below the level of the carburetor air intake (or halfway to the bilge) and an exhaust duct that extends from the deck to the lowest portion of the bilge. The cowls of these ducts must be properly trimmed for maximum ventilation. (Note: A power-operated bilge blower is highly recommended.)

FLAME ARRESTORS

Gasoline engines, other than outboard motors, must be equipped with a U.S. Coast Guard approved backfire flame arrestor on the carburetor.

WHISTLES/HORNS

- ★ Motorboats 16 feet to less than 26 feet long must be equipped with a hand, mouth, or power-operated whistle or horn capable of producing a continuous sound for two seconds and audible for at least one-half mile.
- ★ Motorboats 26 feet to less than 40 feet in length must be equipped with a hand or power-operated horn or whistle capable of producing a continuous sound for two seconds and audible for at least one mile.
- ★ Motorboats 40 feet or more in length must be equipped with a power-operated horn or whistle capable of producing a continuous sound for at least two seconds and audible for at least one mile.
- ★ The only boat that can carry a siren is a government patrol craft.

MUFFLERS/NOISE LIMITS

All watercraft motors must have a muffler, underwater exhaust, or other device that adequately suppresses the sound of the motor.

It is unlawful to modify, equip, sell or operate a motorboat (except under a permit from the county sheriff or U.S. Coast Guard) that exceeds the levels noted in the table below. It is also illegal to have an altered muffler, muffler cutout, muffler bypass, or any other device designed or installed so that it can be used to continually or intermittently bypass any muffler or muffler system, or to reduce or eliminate the effectiveness of a muffler or muffler system.

Motorboat Noise Law Summary Chart

Boat or Engine Manufacture Date	Pass By Test*	Stationary Idle Test*
	Usually taken at 50'. An equivalent reading may also be taken at other distances.	Taken at least 4' above the water and at least 4' behind the transom of the boat.
Before January 1, 1982	84 dBA	86 dBA
January 1, 1982 and after	82 dBA	84 dBA

* Officers and deputies may use either (or both) the pass by or stationary test procedure.

MARINE TOILETS

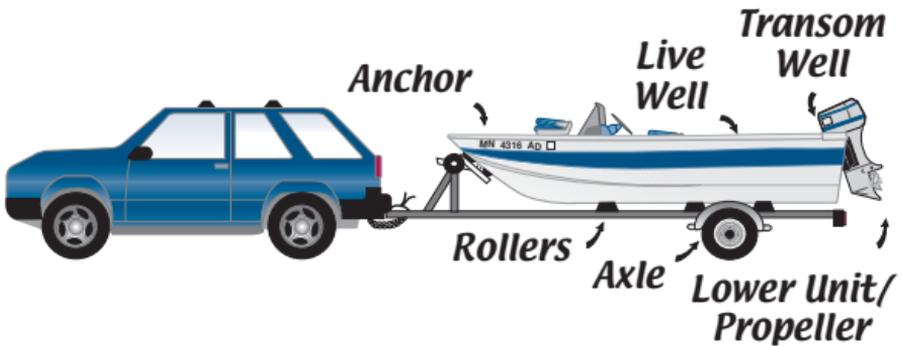
Under state law, toilets on board watercraft must be no-discharge devices. Waste must be retained on board for proper disposal after returning to shore.

For a copy of a fact sheet on marine toilets, drain water disposal and areas where USCG certified treatment devices may be used under federal rules, contact the DNR Boat and Water Safety Section at the address or phone number in the Agency Directory at the end of this booklet.



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!™

Minnesota waters are threatened by many invasive species of plants and animals. It is illegal to transport any aquatic plants, the ruffe, round goby, zebra mussel, sea lamprey or other prohibited invasive species on public roads, or to launch a boat or trailer with these species attached.



How you can help stop their spread:

✓ **Remove** visible aquatic plants and animals from your boat, trailer, and other boating equipment **before** leaving the water access (*see diagram*).

✓ **Drain** water from your boat, motor, live well, and bait containers **before** leaving the water access.

✓ **Spray, rinse, or dry** boats and recreational equipment to remove or kill species that were not visible when leaving a water body. **Before** transporting to another water body:

★ **spray/rinse** with high pressure and/or hot tap water (above 104°F or 40°C) especially if moored for more than a day; **or**

★ **dry** for at least 5 days.

✓ **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash.

For more information, contact the DNR Invasive Species Program, Ecological Services, at (651) 259-5100 or (888) 646-6367.

GENERAL OPERATION

ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement of Minnesota's boat and water safety laws rests with the DNR's conservation officers and the county sheriffs. All state and county enforcement craft will be marked on both sides or with a blue state pennant. Some waters of the state are also under federal jurisdiction. The U.S. Coast Guard and the National Park Service enforce federal boating regulations.

Whenever an enforcement officer contacts you, you are required to stop and allow him or her to come alongside. The officer may warn you about a storm or caution you about the way you're operating your boat. Always remember that a key job of these officers is to ensure your safety afloat.

If you need an enforcement officer, contact him or her by phone, in person, or by mail at the locations given at the end of this pamphlet. Boaters on some waters may be able to request assistance by using a marine band radio. Examples of these areas are Lake of the Woods, Lake Superior, the Lower St. Croix River, the Mississippi River downstream from Minneapolis, the Minnesota River downstream from Shakopee, and Lake Minnetonka.

Violation of a boat and water safety statute or rule is a misdemeanor, with some exceptions for repeat violations or more serious offenses.

AGE OF OPERATORS

The restrictions on boat operators appear on the next page. Operator's permit education materials can be obtained from the DNR (addresses and phone numbers at end of this booklet), sheriff's offices, as well as some schools and marine dealers.

Motorboat Operator Age Restrictions (except personal watercraft - see page 39)

Operator Age	Restrictions
<p>less than 12 years of age</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 25 hp or less - no restriction. 2 more than 25 thru 75 hp - must have someone at least 21 on board within reach of the controls. 3 over 75 hp - cannot operate, even with adult on board.
<hr style="width: 25%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p>12-17 years of age</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 25 hp or less - no restriction. 2 over 25 hp - must either have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ a watercraft operator's permit, <i>or</i> ★ someone at least 21 on board within reach of the controls.

If you are age 12 - 17, visiting Minnesota, and already possess a valid watercraft operator's certificate/permit issued by your home state, you don't need to obtain another one from Minnesota. If you do not have a certificate from your state you may obtain one from Minnesota by successfully completing the DNR's home study boating course. It is available by calling or e-mailing the DNR Information Center - contact information can be found at the end of this booklet.

The Boat Minnesota Internet course at www.dnr.state.mn.us/boating is an option for young boaters wishing to earn their Watercraft Operator's

Permit. It's also a great idea for more mature skippers who want to broaden their boating knowledge and perhaps receive a discount on their boat insurance! (Many boat insurance companies offer discounts to boat owners who have taken an approved boating safety course like ours!)

The great thing about our Internet course is that as soon as you pass the final exam, you can print out a temporary Watercraft Operator's Permit (12-17 years) or Adult Certificate of Completion (18 years and over) right away. The course and practice test are free, however there is a \$15 charge each time you take the final test.

RULES OF THE ROAD

Passing

When overtaking another watercraft going in the same direction, the craft being overtaken must maintain course and speed. The passing watercraft must keep a sufficient distance to avoid collision or endangering the other craft from its wake.

Meeting

When two watercraft approach each other "head-on," each must alter course to the right to avoid collision. If the two watercraft are far enough to the left of each other, no change in direction is needed for safe passage. Both watercraft will maintain their course and speed so as to pass clear of each other, and keep to the right in narrow channels.

Crossing

If two watercraft approach each other at a right angle, the watercraft to the right shall have the right-of-way.

Non-Motorized Craft

Non-motorized craft (sailboats, canoes, etc.) have the right-of-way over motorized craft in all situations, except when the non-motorized is overtaking or passing.

Commercial Vessels

Small boats should not insist on the right-of-way when approaching large commercial vessels, which are limited in maneuverability.

Emergency Craft

All watercraft will yield right-of-way to an authorized watercraft displaying a red or blue flashing light.

WATERWAY MARKERS

Official waterway markers may be in the form of a buoy, sign or light, either in the water or on shore. They assist the boater by marking channels, denoting unsafe areas, directing traffic, controlling speed, protecting resources and other functions. Official markers are usually placed by the U.S. Coast Guard, state, county or local governmental unit. **Private markers of any type may not be placed in the water overnight without a permit from the county sheriff.**

The illustrations on pages 31-33 show the most common buoys used in Minnesota. Although just buoys are shown here, signs can be substituted in certain areas. As an example, a green square sign is the same as a green buoy and red triangular sign is the same as a red buoy - these are often called "daymarks." They can be used to mark each side of a channel, which is common on the Mississippi River below the Twin Cities. A red-white octagonal sign can be used to mark the center of a channel. Regu-

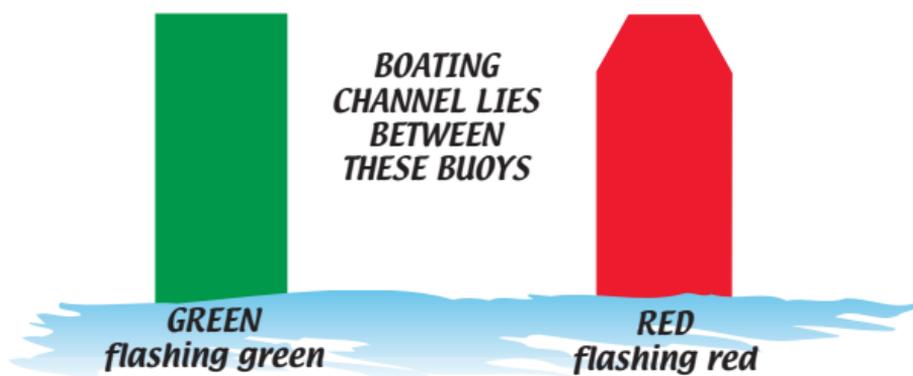
latory and informational signs are generally a white rectangle with orange markings and black lettering.

If a buoy or sign is lighted, it will usually display the color and flash characteristics noted underneath each buoy on pages 31-33. "Flashing" means not more than 30 flashes per minute. "Quick-flashing" means at least 60 flashes per minute and generally indicates caution or danger. Here are some tips on waterway markers to make boating more enjoyable:

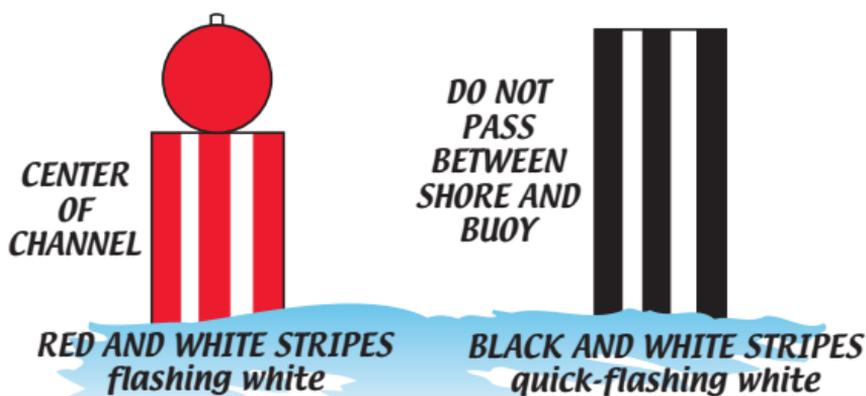
- ★ Don't rely entirely on waterway markers, especially buoys. They can move off station due to wind, waves, current, ice or other reasons.
- ★ Buoys and other waterway markers may not be present outside of the normal boating season. Check locally before heading out.
- ★ Unless you are very familiar with that body of water, avoid travel on lakes and rivers during the hours of darkness.
- ★ Use care on observing white flashing lights since their meaning depends on that of the waterway marker.
- ★ Red and green channel markers may be numbered: green - odd and red - even.

Channel Marker Buoys - Effective 2003

★ All-green and all-red companion buoys indicate that the boating channel is between them. In flowing water, the red buoy is on the right side of the channel when facing upstream.



★ As of 2003, there are now two striped buoys that mark safe navigational areas for boaters. The change was necessary in order to comply with the U.S. Aids to Navigation System: 1) the red-white striped buoy (usually with a red topmark) now indicates the center of a channel and should be passed closely on either side; 2) the black and white striped buoy (formerly red-white striped) indicates there is a shoreward obstruction and that you should not pass between it and the nearest shore.



Regulatory Buoys and Signs

★ **Boats Keep Out.** A white buoy or sign with an orange diamond and cross means that boats must keep out of the area. Black lettering on the buoy or sign gives the reason for the restriction, for example, SWIM AREA.



BOATS KEEP OUT
flashing white



DANGER
quick-flashing white

★ **Danger.** A white buoy or sign with an orange diamond warns boaters of danger - rocks, dams, rapids, etc. The source of danger will also be lettered in black. In winter, ice hazards may also be identified with this marker in the form of a sign.



CONTROLLED AREA
flashing white



INFORMATION
flashing white



MILFOIL
none

★ **Controlled Area.** A white buoy or sign with an orange circle and black lettering indicates controlled or restricted areas on the water. The most common restriction is slow - no wake speed. *Slow - no wake means operating your boat at the slowest possible speed necessary to maintain steerage, but in no case greater than five miles-per-hour.*

★ **Information.** A white buoy or sign with an orange rectangle provides the boater with information or directions. Information will be lettered in black.

★ **Milfoil.** A yellow buoy or sign indicating that an area is infested with Eurasian watermilfoil. The words “Milfoil” or “Milfoil Area” will appear in black letters.



★ **Mooring Buoys.** Buoys designed for mooring boats are all-white with a blue stripe midway between the top and the waterline. A minimum of 16 square inches of white reflectorization, part of which must be visible from any direction, is required on all mooring buoys. (Obtain a permit from the county sheriff before placing a mooring buoy in the water.)

GENERAL PROHIBITIONS

It's against the law:

- ★ To operate a watercraft in a careless or reckless manner.
- ★ To operate a watercraft so that its wash or wake endangers, harasses, or interferes with any person or property.
- ★ To operate a watercraft so it obstructs or tends to obstruct ordinary navigation.
- ★ To operate a watercraft within an area legally marked off or set aside as a swimming area, or within 150 feet of a diver's warning flag (see page 44).

- ★ To operate a watercraft loaded with passengers or cargo beyond its safe carrying capacity, or equipped with a motor or other propulsion machinery beyond its safe power capacity.
- ★ To ride or sit on the gunwales, bow, transom, or decking over the bow, sides or stern of any motorboat while underway, unless it is equipped with an adequate railing, or to operate a motorboat while any person is so riding or sitting.
- ★ To operate a watercraft so that it obstructs or interferes with the take off, landing, or taxiing of a seaplane.
- ★ To moor or attach a watercraft to any buoy, except a mooring buoy, or to any other marking device or guide, or to tamper, molest, remove, or destroy a navigational aid.
- ★ To deposit or leave refuse in or upon the waters of the state or at public access areas.

**BOATING WHILE INTOXICATED (BWI) -
The alcohol concentration for impaired operation
is now .08.**

Operating a motorboat while under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance or other illegal chemical is unlawful. Operators who are impaired may be required to take tests by an enforcement officer. There is a penalty for refusal. BWI convictions and refusals are recorded on the violator's driver's license record.

Most of the BWI law is now found in the motor vehicle statutes, and *first time* violators (no prior DWIs of any kind) who are convicted are subject to:

- (1) up to a \$1,000 fine plus surcharges,
- (2) possible jail time,

- (3) loss of motorboat operating privileges for 90 days during the boating season, upon conviction and notification by the DNR.

In addition to the above penalties, persons who refuse testing will also be subject to a separate and more severe criminal charge for refusal and loss of their motorboat operating privileges for one year, immediately upon refusal.

If any of the following aggravating factors are involved, the offense automatically becomes a gross misdemeanor (a 4th conviction in 10 years can result in a felony penalty):

- ★ an alcohol concentration of .20 or more,
- ★ prior DWI conviction(s) or refusal(s) of any kind in the past 10 years,
- ★ there is a child less than 16 years of age on board.

Penalties will increase with any of the aggravating factors or a refusal, and can include the following:

- ★ a higher fine,
- ★ mandatory jail time,
- ★ loss of motor vehicle driver's license,
- ★ loss of motor vehicle plates and
- ★ forfeiture of the motorboat and trailer being operated at the time of arrest.

The BWI law does not prohibit drinking alcoholic beverages aboard boats nor having an open bottle. The law applies to operators of motorboats that are not anchored, beached, moored, docked or being rowed or propelled by non-mechanical means at the time of the offense.

WATER SKIING

(1) It is unlawful to tow a person on water skis, aquaplane, surfboard, saucer, or similar device unless there is a mirror providing the operator a wide field of vision to the rear, or unless another person in the towing watercraft is continuously watching the person being towed.

Note: For regulations on towing people on water skis or other devices with a personal watercraft (water scooter, Jet Ski, etc.) see page 37.

(2) Water skiing and similar acts are prohibited between one hour after sunset to sunrise of the following day.

(3) Water ski tow ropes may not be longer than 150 feet in length, unless a permit is obtained from the county sheriff.

(4) A U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD) must either be worn by a person being towed on water skis or other device, or carried in the towing watercraft.



PERSONAL WATERCRAFT (Jet Skis)

(As with any other law, the following personal watercraft regulations may be changed by the legislature after the publication of this booklet.)

What is a personal watercraft? Sometimes known as **Jet Skis, Wave Runners, Sea Doos**, water scooters etc., a personal watercraft is defined by law

as a motorboat that is: 1) powered by an inboard motor powering a water jet pump or by an outboard or propeller-driven motor; and 2) designed to be operated by a person or persons sitting, standing, or kneeling on the craft, rather than in the conventional manner of sitting or standing inside a motorboat.

All personal watercraft are considered motorboats and therefore, any regulations that govern other motorboats (such as fishing boats, cabin cruisers, etc.), also govern personal watercraft.

Personal Watercraft Laws

In summary, the law requires that:

- ★ Anyone operating or riding on a personal watercraft must **wear** a U.S. Coast Guard approved Type I, II, III or V personal flotation device (PFD or life jacket).
- ★ Personal watercraft must travel at slow - no wake speed (5mph or less) within 150 feet of non-motorized boats, shore (unless launching or landing skiers directly to or from open water), docks, swim rafts, swimmers, or any moored or anchored boat.
- ★ Operation of personal watercraft is allowed only from 9:30 am to 1 hour before sunset.
- ★ If you tow a person on water skis, or any other device, there must be an additional person on board the personal watercraft to act as an observer. (The observer does not have to be facing backward.) The skier/kneeboarder etc. must also be wearing a PFD or there must be one on board the personal watercraft for the skier.

Factory-installed or factory-specified wide-field rearview mirrors are allowed instead of an observer when pulling a skier or other device (tube, kneeboard, etc.). The mirrors must be specified by the personal

watercraft manufacturer. After-market mirrors, stick-on mirrors, motorcycle mirrors etc., do not qualify for the observer exemption.

- ★ If the machine is equipped by the manufacturer with a lanyard-type engine cutoff switch, it must be attached to the person, life jacket or clothing of the operator when underway.
- ★ You may not operate a personal watercraft if any part of the spring-loaded throttle system has been removed or tampered with so it interferes with the return-to-idle system.
- ★ You may not chase or harass wildlife.
- ★ You may not travel through emergent or floating vegetation at greater than slow - no wake speed.
- ★ You may not operate a personal watercraft in a manner that unreasonably or unnecessarily endangers life, limb or property.
- ★ You may not weave through congested watercraft traffic, or jump the wake of another watercraft within 150 feet of the other watercraft. This includes other personal watercraft.
- ★ A personal watercraft rules decal issued by the DNR needs to be on the craft in full view of the operator.
- ★ You may not operate a personal watercraft while facing backward.

It is unlawful for the owner of the personal watercraft to permit its operation in violation of the age restrictions. See personal watercraft operator age chart on next page.

Selling and Renting Personal Watercraft

- ★ Personal watercraft dealers are required to distribute a summary of the laws and rules

Personal Watercraft Operator Age Restrictions regardless of horsepower (other motorboats - see page 27)	
Operator Age	Restrictions
less than 13 years of age	Cannot operate, even with adult on board.
13 years of age	Must either have: ★ someone at least 21 on board, <i>or</i> ★ a watercraft operator's permit and be in visual supervision by someone at least 21.
14-17 years of age	Must either have: ★ a watercraft operator's permit, <i>or</i> ★ someone at least 21 on board.

governing personal watercraft. Upon request by a purchaser, they must provide instruction regarding laws governing personal watercraft, as well as safe operation of the craft.

- ★ Rental operators must provide required safety equipment and a copy of the personal watercraft laws free of charge, as well as instruction on laws and operation of the craft.
- ★ Both personal watercraft dealers and rental operations must keep a signature record of all persons who buy or rent personal watercraft. This record is to indicate that the buyer or renter has been provided with a copy of the personal watercraft laws and has read them. In addition, those persons less than 18 years of age must show their watercraft operator's

permit before renting a personal watercraft, and the permit number must be recorded on the form by the rental agent. These forms are available from the DNR Boat and Water Safety Section, must be retained for at least six months, and must be available for inspection by DNR conservation officers or county sheriff's deputies during normal business hours.

Some of the General Watercraft Laws That Apply to Personal Watercraft

- ★ All personal watercraft must display valid registration decals and registration (MN) numbers on the forward half of both sides of the craft.
- ★ Your watercraft license card must be kept on board your craft when it's in use.
- ★ All personal watercraft with enclosed engine or fuel compartments (almost all personal watercraft fall into one or the other category) must carry a fully charged, readily accessible, U.S. Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher.
- ★ Personal watercraft may not exceed the maximum watercraft noise levels. Also, you may not modify any motorboat (including personal watercraft) in a way that amplifies or increases the noise it emits above watercraft noise limits. No person shall operate or sell a motorboat so modified.
- ★ No person shall sell or offer for sale replacement or additional parts for a motorboat which when installed in the motorboat will amplify or increase the noise emitted above the noise limit. No person shall operate a motorboat incorporating such parts.
- ★ It is unlawful to operate a personal watercraft while intoxicated.

Personal watercraft concerns

Unfortunately, along with the growth in the number of personal watercraft has come accidents and complaints from lakeshore residents, other boaters and water recreation enthusiasts.

Ride with pride

Many water scooter accidents involve new and inexperienced riders who haven't received adequate training. If you or your family own a personal watercraft or are going to purchase one, be sure to ask the dealer to provide you with any safety information they may have for your craft. All machines are supplied with an owner's manual and many come equipped with a safety video. Be sure everyone who operates the machine (including friends and guests) watches the video and reads the safety information and knows all the special laws that regulate personal watercraft before they are allowed to operate the scooter.

Give it the gas

Many accidents have occurred because the operators forgot (or never learned) that a water scooter will not turn unless you apply the throttle. There is no rudder, so the only way it will turn is if there is water spraying out the steering nozzle. This seems simple, but it's amazing how easy it can be to forget when you are hurtling towards some fixed object. A normal reaction might be to cut the power and then turn the handlebars. This can be a mistake! Remember, to make a turn, keep the throttle pressed as you move the handlebars.

Use sound judgment

Personal watercraft noise complaints are one of the most common types of calls received by water safety officials. Although the sound emitted by water scooters is generally less than the legal noise

limit for motorboats, the way that some people operate their machines causes a great deal of concern among other people on the lake.

Some personal watercraft riders tend to run their machines for long periods of time in a relatively small area. Many of their neighbors find that having to listen to one or more water scooters buzzing around for several hours in front of their property is very disturbing. In fact, the problem became so severe on one Minnesota lake, local authorities banned personal watercraft operation for more than 30 minutes in one area. Jumping personal watercraft out of the water causes an increase in noise levels which can also be irritating to people.

Be a good neighbor

It's not a bad idea to talk to your neighbors before you bring your new machine home. Tell them to feel free to let you know if the noise from your machine is disturbing them and that you'll try to not operate in the same area for a long period of time. If you're going to jump waves, you had best do it far enough out in the lake so the noise won't bother people trying to enjoy a day of quiet relaxation. You might also offer to take them for a ride too! It's amazing how understanding people become after they experience the fun of riding a water scooter.

Protect your riding privileges

Water scooters can be safe and enjoyable as long as enthusiasts learn how to operate their machine carefully, become familiar with Minnesota's personal watercraft laws, and respect their neighbors' peace and quiet by moving around the lake rather than operating in just one small area. Personal watercraft riders will continue to be able to enjoy their sport without further regulation as long as they obey the laws and ride responsibly.

RENTING WATERCRAFT

- ★ All watercraft offered for rent are subject to periodic inspection by the county sheriff. An inspection decal will be issued to each craft that passes this inspection.
- ★ The rental agent is required to provide U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (PFDs) in serviceable condition, as well as all other required safety equipment.
- ★ Watercraft may not be rented, or offered for rent, unless they are in safe condition.
- ★ All rental craft must meet the federal manufacturer's flotation requirements as of the date they were constructed.
- ★ A boat may not be rented to a person who is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.
- ★ A rental boat loaded beyond its weight capacity or powered beyond its horsepower capacity may not leave the place where it is rented.

See page 38 for regulations governing personal watercraft dealers and rental operators.

ACCIDENTS - minimum property damage level raised to \$2,000 in 2003

An accident can happen whenever you are on the water despite all the precautions you may have taken. If an accident does occur, follow these simple steps:

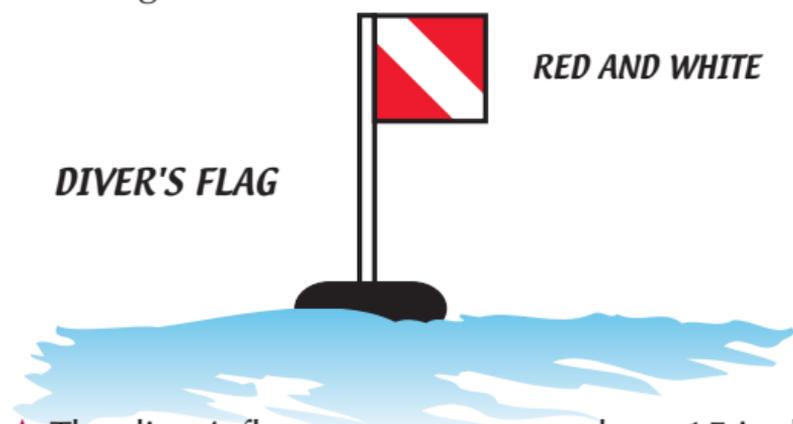
- (1) Stop at the scene and assist others who are in trouble if you can do so safely (required by law).
- (2) Don't risk your life or the lives of others to save equipment.

- (3) Summon help by dialing 911 anywhere in Minnesota.
- (4) If a second boat or other property is involved, exchange your name and boat number with the other operator or owner (as required by law).
- (5) Promptly report all boating accidents to the county sheriff when there is: 1) property damage of \$2,000 or more, 2) personal injury or 3) a fatality. This is required by law.

OTHER WATER ACTIVITIES

SCUBA DIVING

- ★ Scuba divers must display a warning flag when diving.



- ★ The diver's flag must measure at least 15 inches horizontally and 12 inches vertically. Both sides must have a red-colored background bisected diagonally by a three-inch wide white stripe. There is also a blue and white diver's flag authorized under the federal rules of the road.
- ★ No more than four divers shall dive under one flag.
- ★ Divers must remain within 50 feet (measured horizontally) of the warning flag.
- ★ If a group of divers is using a contained area,

the perimeter of the area must be marked. The area must be outside the normal area of navigation. These markings must consist of the official diver's flag and must be placed around the perimeter of the diving area at intervals of not more than 150 feet.

- ★ Do not place a diver's flag where it will obstruct navigation.
- ★ The diver's flag may be displayed on a watercraft or float or be anchored to the bottom. The top of the flag must be at least 30 inches above the surface, however.
- ★ Boats not involved with the diving operation must remain 150 feet away from a flag.
- ★ Persons who dive at any time from sunset to sunrise must carry a diver's light visible when above the water for a distance of 150 feet.
- ★ Scuba or skin diving while in possession of a spear is unlawful from sunset to sunrise.

SWIMMING

Private Areas

The owner or lessee of shoreline property may mark off up to 2,500 square feet, but not more than 50 feet along the lake frontage, for a swimming area directly in front of his or her property. Markers to designate a private swimming area must be white with an orange diamond and cross on each side (see illustration on top left, page 32). The markers must extend out of the water at least six inches but no more than 14 and should be spaced no more than 15 feet apart. (Note: A white gallon plastic bleach bottle with the orange markings painted on each side fulfills this requirement.)

Public Areas

Public swimming areas (including resorts) must be marked off with the standard buoy: "Boats Keep

Out." This buoy is white with an orange band at the bottom and top. Between the orange bands is an orange diamond with a cross inside. The design appears on opposite sides of the buoy. Above or below the diamond shapes are the words SWIM AREA in black, two-inch lettering (see illustration on top left, page 32). Marker buoys must not be spaced more than 75 feet apart. Smaller all-white markers may be used to add definition to the area marked by regulation markers. No specific size limits are imposed on public swimming areas.

Permits

Obtain a permit for swimming area markers from the county sheriff. No swimming marker may obstruct navigation or unduly interfere with public use of the water. Sheriffs or conservation officers may direct the owner to move such markers or remove them from the water.

TEMPORARY STRUCTURES, DOCKS AND BUOYS

Temporary docks extending from shore generally require no permit. There is no state limit on length, unless the dock interferes with navigation. (Note: There may be local restrictions as to dock length or construction.)

Structures such as swimming rafts, boat lifts, buoys, slalom courses, ski jumps, etc., **which do not extend from shore**, cannot be placed in the water between sunset and sunrise without first obtaining a permit from the county sheriff. All structures placed under a permit must have the permit number painted on them. In addition, the structure or buoy must either have a light visible in all directions or be reflectorized so as to reflect light from all directions.

Persons placing structures on joint federal-state

waters may need to obtain a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. (See Special Events below, for examples of these waters.)

SPECIAL EVENTS

Persons holding regattas, races, tournaments, or other competition or exhibition events on the water must first obtain a permit for the event from the county sheriff. The sheriff may exempt watercraft from any of the licensing, operational or equipment statutes or regulations while they participate in the event.

Those persons holding events on commercially-navigable, joint-jurisdictional waters (primarily Lake Superior, the Mississippi River downstream from St. Anthony Falls, the Minnesota River east of Shakopee, and the St. Croix River from Stillwater downstream) must obtain a marine event permit from the U.S. Coast Guard.

PUBLIC WATERS - PERMITS

Any work in the bed of public waters (below the natural ordinary high water level), such as dredging, filling, draining, and placement of structures, **OR** water appropriation of more than ten thousand gallons per day or one million gallons per year requires a permit from the DNR Waters Division.

Applications for aquatic plant permits are available from any DNR Regional Fisheries Office, or DNR Division of Ecological Services in St. Paul and may be downloaded from the DNR Web site listed at the end of this publication.

An aquatic plant management permit is required to:

- ★ remove (by cutting or pulling) submerged vegetation in: a) an area of more than 2,500 square feet **OR** b) an area exceeding 50 feet along the

shoreline or one-half the owner's total frontage, whichever is less,

- ★ apply herbicides or algicides in public waters,
- ★ remove water lilies or other floating-leaf vegetation in an area exceeding a 15-foot wide channel,
- ★ move a bog of any size that is freefloating or lodged in any area other than its original location,
- ★ transplant aquatic plants into public waters,
- ★ install or operate an automated plant control device (such as a Crary WeedRoller®) in public waters.

However, there are some things a lakeshore property owner can do without a permit to maintain a boat docking site or swimming area.

A lakeshore property owner may **physically** or **mechanically** clear the following without a permit:

- ★ **Submerged Vegetation:** An area for swimming or boat docking not exceeding 2,500 square feet and not extending more than 50 feet or one-half the length of the owner's shoreline frontage (whichever is less) may be cleared of submerged aquatic vegetation only by cutting or pulling the plants.
- ★ **Floating Leaf Vegetation:** A boat channel 15 feet or less in width extending to open water may be maintained by mechanical means (cutting or pulling) through floating leaf (water lilies) and submerged vegetation. The channel must take the most direct route to open water and remain in the same location each year.
- ★ Vegetation that is cut or pulled must be immediately and permanently removed from the water and disposed of on high ground where it will not re-enter the lake.
- ★ **Emergent vegetation** may not be removed without a permit under any circumstances.

LOCAL BOATING RESTRICTIONS

Certain bodies of water in Minnesota have local restrictions as to type and size of watercraft or motor horsepower, areas which can be used by boats, boat speed, times for use and minimum distance between boats. With few exceptions, local restrictions on boat use on Minnesota waters must be approved by the DNR and be posted at public access points.

Questions regarding lakes or rivers with local restrictions can be directed to the appropriate county sheriff, the DNR offices listed at the end of this publication, or you can view a list on the DNR web page at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/boating - then click on Local surface use regulations.

BOAT TRAILERS

Dimensions

The maximum length of a boat trailer and boat is 45 feet. No trailer load may exceed 8 1/2 feet in width or 13 1/2 feet in height.

Lights

Two red taillights, license plate light and two red reflectors are required on all trailers. Signal and brake lamps are recommended on all trailers and required at night or whenever the signal of the towing vehicle is not visible to the other drivers. Larger trailers also require clearance and/or marker lamps.

Hitch and Coupling

The hitch and coupling of the trailer must meet state standards. Safety chains are required.

Brakes

Brakes of adequate effectiveness are required on all trailers of 3,000 pounds or more gross weight.

Following

Drivers of vehicles towing a trailer must maintain a distance of 500 feet between their vehicle and the vehicle ahead.

More information on trailer laws is available from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety in St. Paul or from any Minnesota State Patrol office.

BOATING SAFETY TIPS

★What accident causes the most deaths among boaters? Falls overboard and capsizing. In a small boat, resist the urge to stand up. If you must move around, keep your weight low and close to the center of the craft.

★**Wear** your personal flotation device (PFD or life jacket), especially in small boats. Approved PFDs are now stylish, comfortable and practical. Models are available for all ages and for various boating activities. Wearing your PFD is the best “life insurance” policy afloat.

★Collisions with a second boat or another object don’t just happen. They are usually the result of inattention, fatigue, and a lack of knowledge about local water conditions.

★Keep an eye on the weather, especially on larger lakes such as Mille Lacs, Leech, Lake of the Woods, or Superior. Obtain up-to-date weather information from a marine band radio, AM radio, or by simply watching the sky. (Most bad weather in Minnesota comes from the west or southwest.)

If you are caught in rough weather, put on your PFD, keep low in your boat and head for the closest

shore. In heavy waves, your boat handles best when you head **into** the waves at an angle.

★Whitewater canoeing is not a sport for the beginning canoeist. Learn whitewater techniques from experts, wear your PFD at all times, and use common sense in shooting rapids.

★Inflatable toys are no substitutes for swimming skills. Learn how to swim. Know your swimming ability. Supervise youngsters around the water.

★If someone is in trouble in the water, use elementary rescue methods first, such as throwing something that floats to the victim. Only as a last resort should you ever enter the water to save someone. Even then, take a buoyant object like a PFD with you.

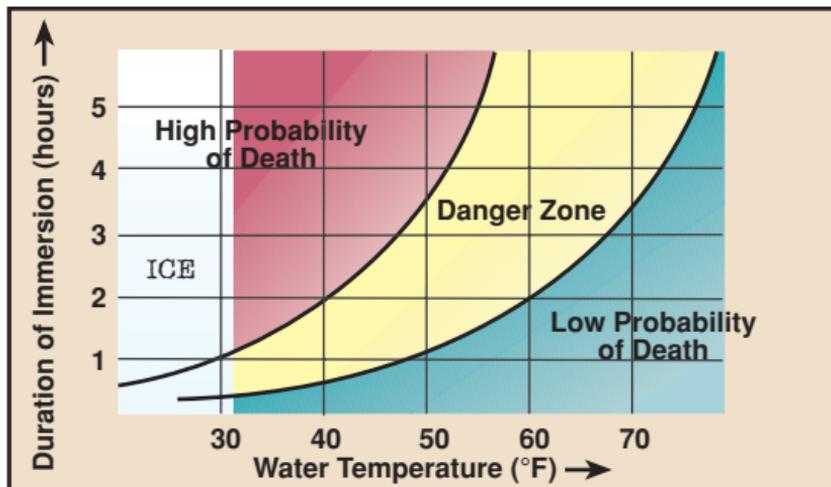
★Before you leave on a boating or fishing trip, let someone know where you are going and when you will return. If you run into trouble, this will assist authorities in looking for you.

★**Hypothermia** (below normal body temperature) is an insidious killer that is involved in perhaps as many as one-half of Minnesota's boating deaths each year. Immersion in cold water (less than 70°F) causes the body to lose heat faster than it can produce it, decreasing the body's inner (core) temperature. This decrease can cause symptoms ranging from continual shivering, poor coordination, and numb hands and feet in moderate cases to hallucinations and eventual death in most extreme situations.

Cold water robs body heat 25 times faster than air of the same temperature, so if you capsize or fall out of your boat, immediately attempt to reboard your craft. Most small boats if overturned, can be righted and bailed out. In fact, modern small craft have built-in flotation that will support the weight of the occupants, even after capsizing or swamping. If you can't right the boat - climb on top and hang on.

Wearing your PFD will help protect you from hypothermia in several ways. It decreases the amount of movement necessary to remain afloat, and it also helps to insulate you from heat loss. A PFD will also keep you afloat if you become unconscious due to hypothermia.

COLD WATER SURVIVAL TIME



The Danger Zone indicates where safety precautions and appropriate behavior can increase your chances of survival when immersed in cold water.

★**Booze is bad news!** Alcohol is involved in about one third of all boating fatalities. In fact, a Coast Guard study from a few years back showed that a boater who was legally intoxicated was 10 times more likely to become involved in a fatal accident than one who was sober.

Alcohol also adversely affects vital body functions such as balance, coordination, vision and judgment. Combining the effects of cold water and alcohol can speed the onset of hypothermia (a dangerous cooling of the body's inner temperature), causing even good swimmers to drown in minutes - often within a few yards of safety.

Even without drinking, four hours exposure to environmental stressors such as sun, wind, noise, vibration and temperature produce a kind of boater's hypnosis which can slow your reaction time almost

ALCOHOL ESTIMATION TABLE*

Women

Body Weight Pounds

Drinks	Alcohol	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240	
0	fl. oz.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Only safe limit.
1	1/2	.05	.04	.03	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.01-.03 Impairment begins.
2	1	.09	.08	.06	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.04-.07 Operating skills
3	1 1/2	.14	.11	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	deteriorating; you can be
4	2	.18	.15	.13	.11	.10	.09	.08	.08	arrested for BWI.
5	2 1/2	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09	.08 Illegal to operate, lose
6	3	.27	.23	.19	.17	.15	.14	.12	.11	operating privileges,
7	3 1/2	.32	.27	.23	.20	.18	.16	.14	.13	subject to criminal
8	4	.36	.30	.26	.23	.20	.18	.17	.15	penalties, fines and/or jail.

Subtract .01% for each 40 minutes of drinking. 1/2 oz. of pure ethyl alcohol can be found in: 1 1/4 oz. of 80 proof liquor, 12 oz. of beer or 5 oz. of wine.

Men

Body Weight Pounds

Drinks	Alcohol	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240	260	
0	fl. oz.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Only safe limit.
1	1/2	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.01	.01-.03 Impairment begins.
2	1	.07	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03	.03	.04-.07 Operating skills
3	1 1/2	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05	.04	deteriorating; you can be
4	2	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.07	.07	.06	.06	arrested for BWI.
5	2 1/2	.19	.16	.13	.12	.10	.09	.08	.08	.07	.08 Illegal to operate, lose
6	3	.22	.19	.16	.14	.12	.11	.10	.09	.09	operating privileges,
7	3 1/2	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11	.10	subject to criminal
8	4	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.12	.12	penalties, fines and/or jail.

Subtract .01% for each 40 minutes of drinking. 1/2 oz. of pure ethyl alcohol can be found in: 1 1/4 oz. of 80 proof liquor, 12 oz. of beer or 5 oz. of wine.

***Using .08% as the presumptive level of impairment.**

as much as if you were drunk. Adding alcohol to these stressors intensifies their effects to a perilous level.

THE "CIRCLE OF DEATH"

Every year, serious injuries and deaths occur when operators let go of the steering wheel or out-board steering handle while the boat is moving. A phenomenon called steering torque forces the motor to slam left causing the boat to swerve sharply to the right, throwing the victim into the water.



The boat continues to travel in a circle and returns to strike the victim in the water, inflicting massive propeller wounds. Thus the term “circle of death.”

The way to avoid circle of death accidents is to avoid letting go of the steering wheel or handle until the boat ceases all forward motion.

If you notice that it takes extra pressure on the steering wheel or handle, have your boat serviced immediately. On some smaller outboards, repair may be as simple as tightening a bolt.

For outboards and inboard-outboard craft, corrective measures may involve resetting the boat’s trim tab, the small fin mounted on the anti-ventilation or cavitation plate just behind the prop.

If the motor is equipped with an automatic kill switch, be sure to fasten the lanyard to your life jacket or some article of clothing such as a belt loop. If you do fall out of your boat, the lanyard, which is

attached to the electrical system, disables the motor, keeping the boat from circling back to hit you.

Be sure that clamp-on swivel seats are tightly secured and that seat backs are sturdy enough to withstand the shock of a victim being thrown against them.

THE SILENT KILLER - CARBON MONOXIDE



Passengers of just about any boat with a motor on board can be victims of carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas that can be toxic even in very small quantities since its effects are cumulative over time. There have been injuries and deaths caused by the infiltration of poisonous gasses into boats' living and sleeping spaces.

Common signs of carbon monoxide poisoning include irritated eyes, headache, nausea, weakness and dizziness. These symptoms can often be misdiagnosed as seasickness or intoxication!

A newly-recognized phenomenon has been discovered where swimmers died when they ventured too closely to houseboats' swim platforms while engines or generators were running, and victims have been poisoned while being towed or dragged too near the stern of a boat.

To help avoid the dangers of carbon monoxide on your watercraft:

- ★ Keep air flowing throughout the boat whenever any gas or diesel engine or propane appliance is running.
- ★ Stay away from any area where engine or generator exhaust is vented.
- ★ Do not leave your generator running at night or when anchored.

- ★ Install carbon monoxide detectors in the living areas of your boat, test them frequently and never remove the batteries unless you are replacing them with new ones.
- ★ Keep your boat and motor properly maintained including keeping exhaust clamps tight and in place. Also, it's a good idea to replace exhaust hoses if there is cracking or deterioration.

Skiing, dragging, or tubing closer than 20 feet from a motorboat can be fatal from carbon monoxide poisoning - so stay well away!

THE DROWNING MACHINE

★ **Lowhead dams** have claimed the lives of about 25 Minnesotans in the last twenty years. These dams are usually small structures no more than 10 feet high, although some are as low as six inches. Because of their small size, they do not appear to be dangerous, especially from a boat or canoe upstream. In the spring and during other periods of high runoff, however, the dams become very dangerous. The recirculating current created by the water pouring over the dam creates a backwash. This current takes any object - including people wearing PFDs - to the bottom of the stream, releases it to the surface, sucks it back to the face of the the



This sign, installed at many dam sites around the state, warns people of the potential dangers of a lowhead dam.

dam, and pushes it back to the bottom; the cycle can continue indefinitely. Swimmers, anglers, canoeists and people in motorboats all have fallen victim to this perfect drowning machine. Keep well clear of these structures.

BOATING COURSES

Learn more about boating and water safety. Organizations such as the DNR, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, Red Cross, and local school districts have free or low cost education programs and publications available. Call (800) 336-BOAT toll free to find the class nearest you or check out the Internet sites on pages 64-65.

BOATING ON LAKE SUPERIOR

As more people turn to the waters of Lake Superior for fishing and boating, the importance of boating safety cannot be overemphasized.

- ★ Take a boating safety course from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGA), or U.S. Power Squadrons and get advice from veteran boaters.
- ★ Make sure your craft size is appropriate and you have the required safety equipment - have a USCGA Vessel Safety Check (VSC) to make sure.
- ★ Weather can change rapidly on the lake - monitor the skies and radio.
- ★ Water temperatures on Superior are always cold - even in the summer - always wear your life jacket and consider other survival gear as well.



- ★ Carry a VHF marine radio, chart, visual distress signals and Global Positioning System (GPS) - but remember electronics can sometimes fail.
- ★ Let someone know where you are going and when you will return.
- ★ Take advantage of the DNR's safe harbors and launch ramps on Lake Superior - check them out at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/water_access/safeharbors.

SECURITY

Due to heightened national security, please note the following when you are boating or fishing:

- ★ On occasion, U.S. Navy ships may be encountered on Lake Superior or the Duluth-Superior Harbor - stay at least 100 yards from these vessels, and operate at slow-no wake speed within 500 yards.
- ★ If possible, avoid commercial ships and port areas on Lake Superior.
- ★ Observe any restricted areas near power plants, dams and bridges and when possible, avoid anchoring near these areas.

★ Report any suspicious activity immediately by using your cell phone (*always* call **911** for an emergency response) or use your marine radio to contact the U.S. Coast Guard, state or local enforcement officers. The Coast Guard has also established a 24-hour toll-free number at its national response center – 1-800-424-8802.

Suspicious activities could include:

- (1) People appearing to be engaged in surveillance activities, especially around critical or restricted areas (see above).
- (2) Unusual boating activity or unattended boats in unusual locations.
- (3) Persons attempting to buy or rent a boat with cash for a short-term undefined use.
- (4) Large numbers of people on board non-passenger vessels.
- (5) Unusual nighttime activity or lights flashing between boats.



PUBLIC WATER ACCESS

INFORMATION & MAPS

Minnesota has over 3,000 public accesses to lakes and rivers. Over 1,500 of these are managed by the Department of Natural Resources. Free maps showing access location and information are available for most counties. You can view and print them online at the DNR web page:

www.dnr.state.mn.us/water_access

or call the DNR Information Center at:

(651) 296-6157 or Toll free (888) 646-6367.

LAUNCHING YOUR BOAT

Here are a couple of tips when using an access:

- ★ Make the next launch easier - practice backing your boat trailer in an empty

parking lot before venturing out to the lake or river.

- ★ At the access, make sure your boat is ready to launch *before* you back your trailer onto the ramp – remove travel covers, tie-downs (except the bow winch line), tilt the motor or lower unit up, attach a control line to handle the boat during the launch and insure your drain plug is in.
- ★ When you retrieve your boat, please use your winch. Using the engine to “power load” the boat can create a hole at the end of the ramp resulting in trailer damage and costly repairs to the access.



WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

For regulations pertaining to the use of motor-boats within Wildlife Management Areas, be sure to check the “Minnesota Hunting and Trapping Regulations” handbook or contact the MN DNR Information Center at (651) 296-6157 or toll free (888) 646-6367.

SUNKEN BOATS & VEHICLES

Minnesota law now requires that watercraft and motor vehicles (including cars, trucks, snowmobiles and ATVs) that sink in a lake or river be removed by the owner within 30 days. Owners must also notify the county sheriff within 48 hours. If the watercraft or vehicle is not removed - the local unit of government can remove it and charge the owner two to five times the cost of removal.



Unsinkable Molly Brown.

Children under 10 years old are now required to wear a life jacket while boating in Minnesota.

**It's smart, it's safe, it's the law.*

*Except when boat is anchored and being used as a swimming platform or the child is below decks or in an enclosure or cabin on the craft.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

AGENCY DIRECTORY

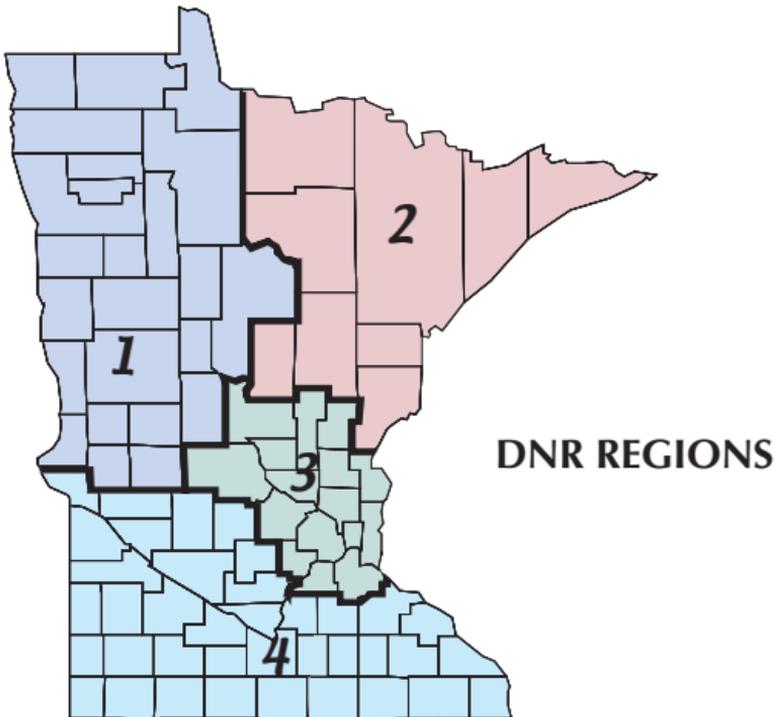
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Boat and Water Safety Section
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4046
(651) 259-5400

Information Center
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040
(651) 296-6157
Toll free (888) 646-6367 or
(888-MINNDNR)
TTY (hearing impaired) (651) 296-5484
Toll free TTY (800) 657-3929

For information about registration or titling of your boat, and snowmobile or ATV registration contact:

MN DNR - Registration & Titling Section
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4026
(651) 296-2316 Toll free (800) 285-2000



Regional Offices

Region 1: 2115 Birchmont Beach Rd. N.E.
Bemidji, MN 56601
(218) 755-3955

Region 2: 1201 E. Highway 2
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 327-4455

Region 3: 1200 Warner Rd.
St. Paul, MN 55106
(651) 772-7900

Region 4: 261 Highway 15 So.
New Ulm, MN 56073
(507) 359-6000

Local DNR Conservation Officer

Contact the Minnesota State Patrol or county sheriff for the name and phone number of the MN DNR conservation officer in your area.

County Sheriffs

Check the local phone directory. Sheriff's non-emergency numbers will usually be listed inside of the front cover. *In an emergency call "911" anywhere in Minnesota.*

United States Coast Guard

Boating Safety Hotline
TOLL FREE (800) 368-5647

Coast Guard Station DULUTH
1201 Minnesota Street
Duluth, MN 55802
(218) 720-5412

Coast Guard Search & Rescue Detachment
North Superior
Grand Marais, MN
(218) 387-2574
(seasonal only)

United States Army

Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District
Public Affairs
190 E. 5th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 290-5200

Internet Sites

Minnesota DNR

Boat & Water Safety

www.dnr.state.mn.us/boating

E-Mail Minnesota DNR Boat & Water Safety

boatandwater@dnr.state.mn.us

Minnesota DNR Online Licensing

www.wildlifelicense.com/mn/

U.S. Coast Guard:

U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety

www.uscgboating.org

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary:

www.cgaux.org/

Internet Sites *(continued)*

U.S. Power Squadrons

National Website

www.usps.org

Duluth Power Squadron

www.usps.org/localusps/duluth/

Hiawatha Valley Sail & Power Squadron

www.usps.org/localusps/hiawatha/

Minnetonka Power Squadron

www.minnetonkaps.org

St. Paul Sail and Power Squadron

www.usps.org/localusps/stpaul/

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - St. Paul

www.mvp.usace.army.mil/

BOAT US

www.boatus.com

Federal Communications Commission

www.fcc.gov/

National Park Service:

Voyager's National Park

www.nps.gov/voya/

St. Croix Scenic Riverway

www.nps.gov/sacn/

Mississippi National River & Recreation Area

www.nps.gov/miss/

Wisconsin DNR

www.dnr.state.wi.us/

Canada, Office of Boating Safety

www.tc.gc.ca/BoatingSafety/menu.htm

Minnesota State Legislature (Statutes & Rules)

www.leg.state.mn.us

U.S. Naval Observatory

www.usno.navy.mil/ then look for *Popular Links*, and click on *Sunrise / Set* (convert to daylight savings time if needed).

2006 SUNRISE AND SUNSET TIME SCHEDULE

*Longitude of Minneapolis
(From the U.S. Naval Observatory*)*

Variation approximately 4 minutes to each degree or 1 minute for each 12 miles. Add to determine time for points west, and subtract for points east of Minneapolis.

MO.	APR.		MAY		JUNE		JULY		AUG.		SEPT.		OCT.	
DAY	Rise AM	Set PM												
1	5:53	6:40	6:02	8:18	5:29	8:52	5:30	9:03	5:58	8:39	6:34	7:50	7:10	6:53
2	6:51	7:41	6:00	8:19	5:29	8:53	5:30	9:02	5:59	8:38	6:36	7:48	7:12	6:51
3	6:50	7:43	5:59	8:20	5:28	8:53	5:31	9:02	6:00	8:36	6:37	7:46	7:13	6:49
4	6:48	7:44	5:58	8:22	5:28	8:54	5:32	9:02	6:01	8:35	6:38	7:44	7:14	6:47
5	6:46	7:45	5:56	8:23	5:27	8:55	5:32	9:02	6:02	8:34	6:39	7:42	7:15	6:46
6	6:44	7:46	5:55	8:24	5:27	8:56	5:33	9:01	6:04	8:32	6:40	7:40	7:17	6:44
7	6:42	7:48	5:54	8:25	5:27	8:56	5:34	9:01	6:05	8:31	6:42	7:38	7:18	6:42
8	6:40	7:49	5:52	8:26	5:26	8:57	5:34	9:00	6:06	8:29	6:43	7:37	7:19	6:40
9	6:39	7:50	5:51	8:28	5:26	8:58	5:35	9:00	6:07	8:28	6:44	7:35	7:20	6:38
10	6:37	7:52	5:50	8:29	5:26	8:58	5:36	8:59	6:08	8:26	6:45	7:33	7:22	6:36
11	6:35	7:53	5:48	8:30	5:26	8:59	5:37	8:59	6:09	8:25	6:46	7:31	7:23	6:35
12	6:33	7:54	5:47	8:31	5:25	8:59	5:38	8:58	6:11	8:23	6:48	7:29	7:24	6:33
13	6:31	7:55	5:46	8:32	5:25	9:00	5:38	8:58	6:12	8:22	6:49	7:27	7:25	6:31
14	6:30	7:57	5:45	8:34	5:25	9:00	5:39	8:57	6:13	8:20	6:50	7:25	7:27	6:29
15	6:28	7:58	5:44	8:35	5:25	9:01	5:40	8:56	6:14	8:19	6:51	7:23	7:28	6:28
16	6:26	7:59	5:43	8:36	5:25	9:01	5:41	8:55	6:15	8:17	6:52	7:21	7:29	6:26
17	6:24	8:00	5:41	8:37	5:25	9:01	5:42	8:55	6:17	8:15	6:53	7:19	7:31	6:24
18	6:23	8:02	5:40	8:38	5:25	9:02	5:43	8:54	6:18	8:14	6:55	7:18	7:32	6:22
19	6:21	8:03	5:39	8:39	5:26	9:02	5:44	8:53	6:19	8:12	6:56	7:16	7:33	6:21
20	6:19	8:04	5:38	8:40	5:26	9:02	5:45	8:52	6:20	8:11	6:57	7:14	7:35	6:19
21	6:18	8:05	5:37	8:41	5:26	9:03	5:46	8:51	6:21	8:09	6:58	7:12	7:36	6:17
22	6:16	8:07	5:37	8:42	5:26	9:03	5:47	8:50	6:23	8:07	6:59	7:10	7:37	6:16
23	6:14	8:08	5:36	8:43	5:26	9:03	5:48	8:49	6:24	8:05	7:01	7:08	7:39	6:14
24	6:13	8:09	5:35	8:44	5:27	9:03	5:49	8:48	6:25	8:04	7:02	7:06	7:40	6:13
25	6:11	8:10	5:34	8:45	5:27	9:03	5:50	8:47	6:26	8:02	7:03	7:04	7:41	6:11
26	6:10	8:12	5:33	8:46	5:27	9:03	5:51	8:46	6:27	8:00	7:04	7:02	7:43	6:10
27	6:08	8:13	5:32	8:47	5:28	9:03	5:52	8:45	6:29	7:58	7:06	7:00	7:44	6:08
28	6:06	8:14	5:32	8:48	5:28	9:03	5:53	8:44	6:30	7:57	7:07	6:59	7:45	6:06
29	6:05	8:15	5:31	8:49	5:29	9:03	5:55	8:43	6:31	7:55	7:08	6:57	6:47	5:05
30	6:03	8:17	5:30	8:50	5:29	9:03	5:56	8:41	6:32	7:53	7:09	6:55	6:48	5:04
31			5:30	8:51			5:57	8:40	6:33	7:51			6:49	5:02

* To determine the exact sunrise and sunset time for your location - log onto the U.S. Naval Observatory Website - see page 65.

**DISPLAY YOUR NAVIGATION LIGHTS
BETWEEN SUNSET AND SUNRISE**

FLOAT PLAN

If you are planning on an extended or even a weekend fishing or boating trip, you should leave a float plan with someone who can notify the county sheriff or U.S. Coast Guard (Great Lakes only), should you not return as scheduled.

Description of boat

size _____ color _____

make _____ other _____

Number of persons on board (names and addresses)

Trip Plan

When leaving _____

Where _____

Expect to return by _____

Vehicle parked where _____

Description and license of vehicle _____

Can be contacted by calling

If not returned by (time) _____

Call the following: _____ county

sheriff at () _____

U.S. Coast Guard at () _____

Cancel your float plan when you return.

FREE PUBLICATIONS ORDER FORM

For more information on boat and water safety, the DNR has these publications available at no charge. Simply check off your selections on this order form, clip it out of the boating guide, and mail it (or e-mail) to the address below.

- Danger, Thin Ice
- Recommended Ice Thickness Safety Card
- Prescription for Duck Hunters
- Metro Area Rivers Guide (Twin Cities)
- Mississippi River Guide (Hastings to Iowa)
- Minnesota Boating Guide (this publication)
- Lake Superior Boating Guide
- Water Safety Coloring Book
- Buoy Identification Sticker
- Alcohol Concentration Card (shows relationship between number of drinks and "blood alcohol" level for men and women)
- Personal Watercraft Laws
- Personal Watercraft Rules Decal
- Hypothermia, the Cold Facts
- Youth Watercraft Operator Permit Packet
- H₂O Toons (boating safety comic book for ages 7-12)

YOUR ADDRESS:

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

CUSTOMER ID# (last 4 digits of phone#) _____

MAIL THIS ORDER FORM TO:
MN DNR - BOAT & WATER SAFETY
500 LAFAYETTE RD.
ST. PAUL, MN 55155-4046
e-mail: boatandwater@dnr.state.mn.us