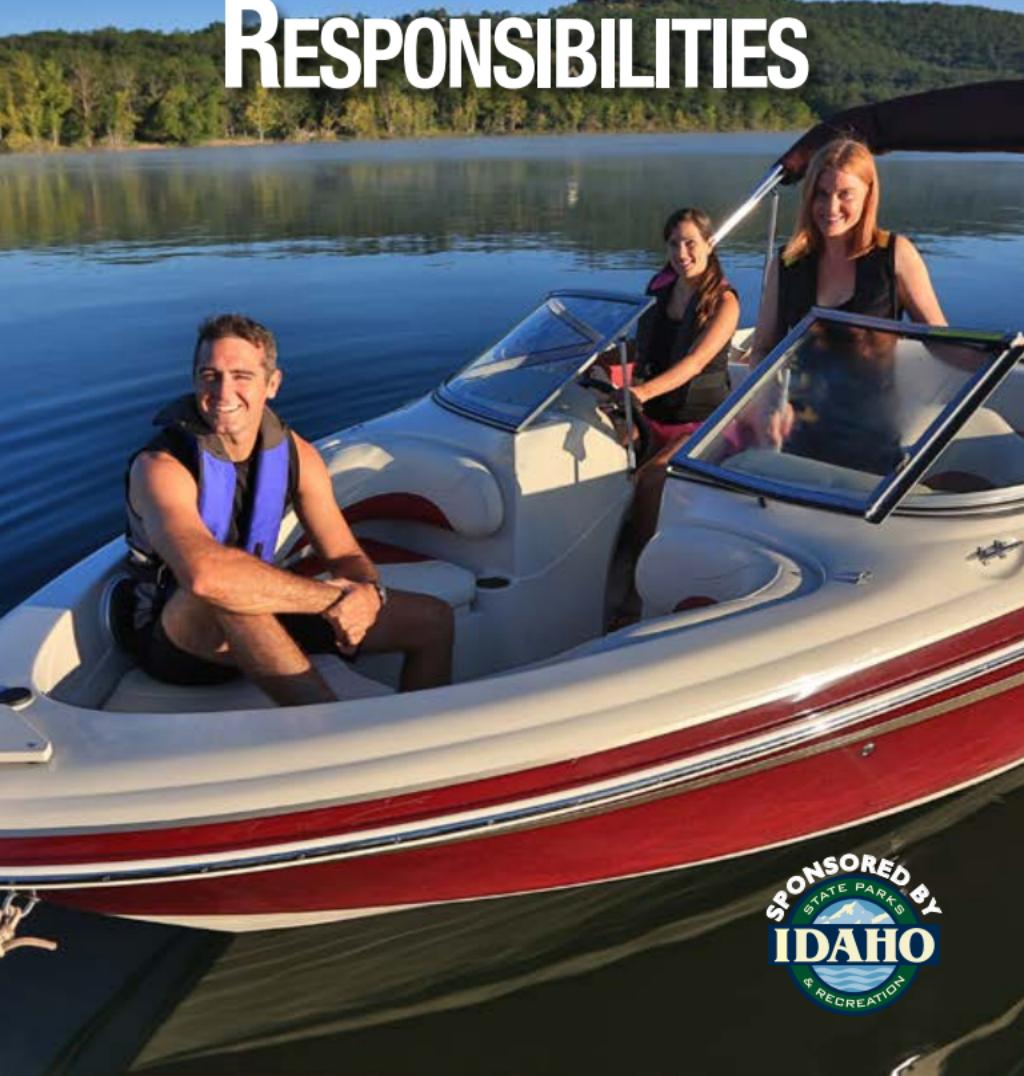


*the*  
**HANDBOOK!**  
OF  
**IDAHO BOATING LAWS**  
AND  
**RESPONSIBILITIES**





## A Course on Responsible Boating

Boater education is a good idea for all Idaho boaters. Not only will you learn how to boat safely, but becoming certified also can save you money on your boat or PWC insurance. You have two ways to be certified.



### 1. Over the Internet...

Learn what you need to know to be a safe boater or personal watercraft (PWC) operator online! The complete course with exciting visuals awaits you on the Net. Interactive graphics help you learn and retain information on boating safely in Idaho. Successfully complete the online test, and you will receive your boater education certificate by mail.

Start today at [www.boat-ed.com/idaho](http://www.boat-ed.com/idaho)  
or at [www.boatidaho.gov](http://www.boatidaho.gov)

### 2. In a classroom...

Share the learning experience with other interested students and a qualified instructor. Classes are offered by the county sheriff's office, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, and community education organizations. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation can help you find a classroom course in your area. For more information:

Call 208-334-4199  
or visit [www.boatidaho.gov](http://www.boatidaho.gov)

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# *the* **HANDBOOK!**

OF

## **IDAHO**

## **BOATING LAWS**

AND

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

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## Stay Abreast of New Boating Laws...

- For state boating law information, access the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation's website at:  
[www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov](http://www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov)  
[www.boatidaho.gov](http://www.boatidaho.gov)



Or you may contact the county sheriff or call the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation:

**208-334-4199**

- For federal boating laws, visit the U.S. Coast Guard's boating safety website: [www.uscgboating.org](http://www.uscgboating.org)

*Information in this handbook does not replace what is specifically legal in Idaho, which is found in the Idaho Safe Boating Act.*

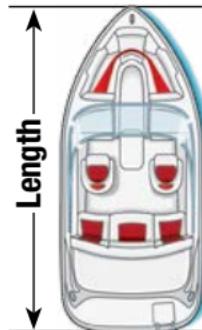
# Before Going Out

Before going out on the water, take steps to make the outing safe and enjoyable.

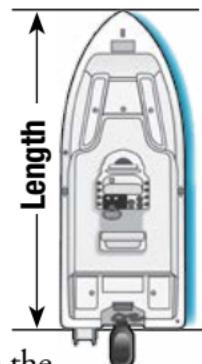
## Vessel Length Classes

- A vessel's length class determines the equipment necessary to comply with federal and state laws.
- Vessels are divided into length classes:
  - Less than 16 feet
  - 16 feet to less than 26 feet
  - 26 feet to less than 40 feet
  - 40 feet to less than 65 feet
- Length is measured from the tip of the bow in a straight line to the stern. This does not include outboard motors, brackets, rudders, bow attachments, or swim platforms and ladders that are not a molded part of the hull.

### Inboards



### Outboards



## Vessel Capacity

- Always check the capacity plate, which is usually found near the operator's position or on the vessel's transom. This plate indicates the maximum weight capacity and maximum number of people that the vessel can carry safely. It also indicates the maximum horsepower.
- PWCs and some other vessels are not required to have a capacity plate. Always follow the recommended capacity in the owner's manual and on the manufacturer's warning decal.

## Fueling a Vessel

Never fuel at night unless it is an emergency. If you must refuel after dark, use only electric lights. Try to refuel away from the water or on a commercial fueling ramp.

**■ Before beginning to fuel:**

- Dock the boat securely and ask all passengers to exit.
- Do not allow anyone to smoke or strike a match.
- Check all fuel lines, connections, and fuel vents.
- Turn off anything that might cause a spark—engines, fans, or electrical equipment.
- Shut off all fuel valves and extinguish all open flames, such as galley stoves and pilot lights.
- Close all windows, ports, doors, and other openings to prevent fumes from entering the boat.
- Remove portable fuel tanks and fill them on the dock.

**■ While filling the fuel tank:**

- Keep the nozzle of the fuel-pump hose in contact with the tank opening to prevent producing a static spark.
- Avoid spilling fuel into the boat's bilge or the water.
- Never fill a tank to the brim—leave room to expand.

**The most important safe fueling practice...**

If your vessel is equipped with a power ventilation system, turn it on for at least four minutes after fueling and before starting your engine to remove gas vapors in the bilge.

**■ After fueling:**

- Wipe up any spilled fuel.
- Open all windows, ports, doors, and other openings.

**Additional Safety Procedures for PWCs**

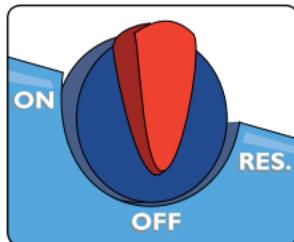
- Do not tip the PWC in order to fill it all the way up. If the tank is overfilled, the fuel may expand and spill into the water.
- After fueling, open the door of the engine compartment and sniff to check for any evidence of gas fumes. Do this before starting the engine. If you do smell gas fumes, determine the source and make repairs immediately.



## Fuel Selector Switch on a PWC

This switch can help you avoid becoming stranded without fuel.

- Use the “Off” position when the PWC’s engine is turned off.
- Use the “On” position while you are underway.
- Use the “Reserve” position if you run out of fuel while underway. This will allow you to return to shore. Don’t forget to switch back to “On” after refueling.



## Preventing Theft

Defend against theft of your vessel and equipment.

- Store your vessel so that it is not easily accessed.
  - Store your vessel and trailer in a locked garage or storage area.
  - Park another vehicle in front of the trailer, or lock the trailer to a fixed object in a well-lit area.
  - Secure the vessel and trailer to a fixed object with a good quality chain and lock. If moored, secure the vessel to the dock with a steel cable and lock.
  - Remove a trailer wheel if parked for an extended time.
  - Purchase a quality trailer hitch lock and use it.
- Chain and lock the motor and fuel tanks to the vessel.
- Mark or engrave all equipment with an identifier such as your driver’s license number.
- Photograph or videotape the interior and exterior of your vessel, showing all installed equipment and additional gear and equipment. Make a complete inventory of your equipment, vessel, and trailer.
- Remove expensive electronics or other valuables if the vessel is left unattended.
- Cover your vessel and always remove the keys.
- Title and register your vessel.

## Filing a Float Plan

Before going out on a vessel, it is always a good idea to leave a float plan with a relative or friend, or at least with a local marina. A float plan should:

- Describe the vessel, including its registration number, length, make, horsepower, and engine type.
- State where you are going, the detailed route, your planned departure time, and your expected return time.
- Give the name, address, and telephone number of each person on board and an emergency contact.

### Pre-Departure Checklist

You can help assure a good time while operating your vessel by performing this pre-departure check.

- ✓ Check the weather forecast for the area and time frame during which you will be boating.
- ✓ Make sure that the steering and throttle controls operate properly and all lights are working properly.
- ✓ Check for any fuel leaks from the tank, fuel lines, and carburetor.
- ✓ Check the engine compartment for oil leaks.
- ✓ Check hose connections for leaks or cracks, and make sure hose clamps are tight.
- ✓ Drain all water from the engine compartment, and be sure the bilge plug is replaced and secure.
- ✓ Check to be sure you have a fully charged engine battery and fire extinguishers.
- ✓ If so equipped, make sure the ignition safety switch and wrist lanyard are in good order.
- ✓ Make sure you have the required number of personal flotation devices (PFDs), and check that they are in good condition.
- ✓ Leave a float plan with a reliable friend or relative.

# On the Water

Safe navigation on Idaho waterways is everyone's responsibility. All operators are equally responsible for taking action necessary to avoid collisions.

## Encountering Other Vessels

Even though no vessel has the "right-of-way" over another vessel, there are some rules that every operator should follow when encountering other vessels. It is the responsibility of both operators to take the action needed to avoid a collision. The next page shows what to do when encountering another vessel.

**To prevent collisions, every operator should follow the three basic rules of navigation.**

- Practice good seamanship.
- Keep a sharp lookout.
- Maintain a safe speed and distance.

## Encountering Vessels With Limited Maneuverability

- When operating a power-driven vessel, you must give way to:
  - Any vessel not under command, such as an anchored or disabled vessel
  - Any vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver, such as a vessel towing another or laying cable, or one constrained by its draft, such as a large ship in a channel
  - A vessel engaged in commercial fishing
  - A sailboat under sail unless it is overtaking
- When operating a vessel under sail, you must give way to:
  - Any vessel not under command
  - Any vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver
  - A vessel engaged in commercial fishing

## Navigation Rules

There are two terms that help explain these rules.

- **Stand-on vessel:** The vessel that should maintain its course and speed
- **Give-way vessel:** The vessel that must take early and substantial action to avoid collision by stopping, slowing down, or changing course

### Power vs. Power

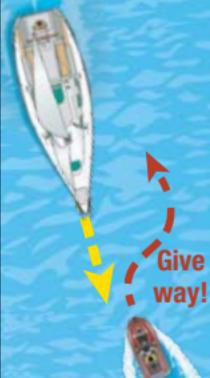


### Meeting Head-On

**Power vs. Power:** Neither vessel is the stand-on vessel. Both vessels should keep to the starboard (right).

**Power vs. Sail:** The powerboat is the give-way vessel. The sailboat is the stand-on vessel.

### Power vs. Sail



### Crossing Situations

**Power vs. Power:** The vessel on the operator's port (left) side is the give-way vessel. The vessel on the operator's starboard (right) side is the stand-on vessel.

**Power vs. Sail:** The powerboat is the give-way vessel. The sailboat is the stand-on vessel.



### Overtaking

**Power vs. Power:** The vessel that is overtaking another vessel is the give-way vessel. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on vessel.

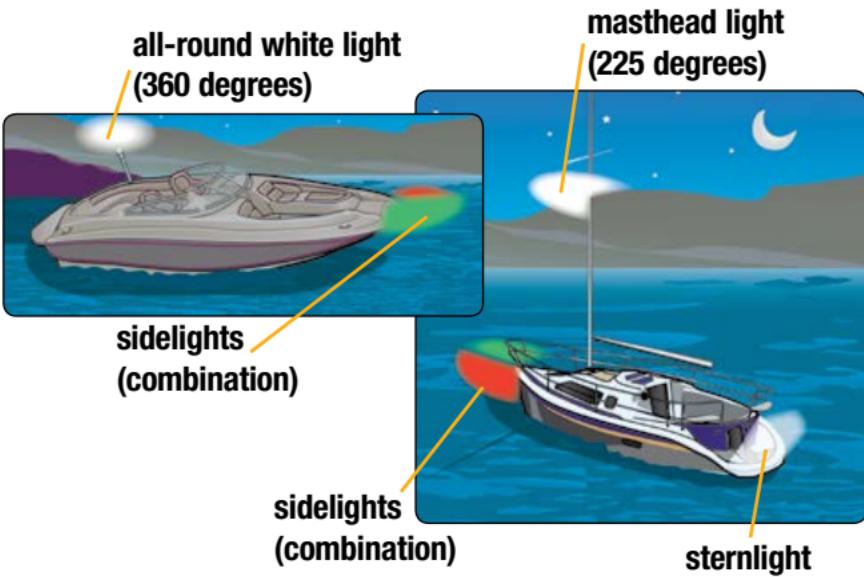
**Power vs. Sail:** The vessel that is overtaking another vessel is the give-way vessel. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on vessel.



## Nighttime Navigation

Be on the lookout for the lights of other vessels when boating at night. Several types of lights serve as navigation aids at night. There are four common navigation lights.

- **Sidelights:** These red and green lights are called sidelights (also called combination lights) because they are visible to another vessel approaching from the side or head-on. The red light indicates a vessel's port (left) side; the green indicates a vessel's starboard (right) side.
- **Sternlight:** This white light is seen from behind or nearly behind the vessel.
- **Masthead Light:** This white light shines forward and to both sides and is required on all power-driven vessels. A masthead light must be displayed by all vessels when under engine power. The absence of this light indicates a sailboat under sail.
- **All-Round White Light:** On power-driven vessels less than 39.4 feet in length, this light may be used to combine a masthead light and sternlight into a single white light that can be seen by other vessels from any direction. This light serves as an anchor light when sidelights are extinguished.



## Encountering Vessels at Night



When you see only a white light, you are overtaking another vessel. It is the stand-on vessel whether it is underway or anchored. You may go around it on either side.



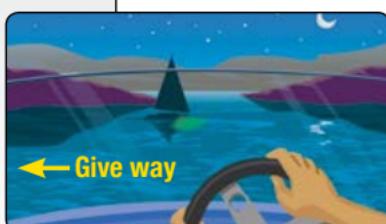
When you see a green and a white light, you are the stand-on vessel. However, remain alert in case the other vessel operator does not see you or does not know the navigation rules.



When you see a red and a white light, you must give way to the other vessel! Slow down and allow the vessel to pass, or you may turn to the right and pass behind the other vessel.

## Encountering a Sailboat at Night

When you see **only a red light** or **only a green light**, you may be approaching a sailboat under sail and you must give way. The sailboat under sail is always the stand-on vessel!



## U.S. Aids to Navigation System (ATON)

Buoys and markers are the “traffic signals” that guide vessel operators safely along some waterways. They also identify dangerous or controlled areas and give directions and information. As a recreational boat or PWC operator, you will need to know the lateral navigation markers and non-lateral markers of the U.S. Aids to Navigation System.

### Lateral Markers

These navigation aids mark the edges of safe water areas; for example, directing travel within a channel. The markers use a combination of colors and numbers, which may appear on either buoys or permanently placed markers.

**Red colors, red lights,** and even numbers indicate the right side of the channel as a boater enters from the open sea or heads upstream.



**Green colors, green lights,** and odd numbers indicate the left side of the channel as a boater enters from the open sea or heads upstream.

**Red and green colors and/or lights** indicate the preferred (primary) channel. If green is on top, the preferred channel is to the right as a boater enters from the open sea or heads upstream; if red is on top, the preferred channel is to the left.



**Nuns** are red cone-shaped buoys marked with even numbers.

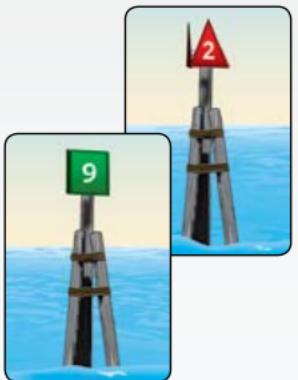


**Cans** are green cylindrical-shaped buoys marked with odd numbers.



**Lighted Buoys** use the lateral marker colors and numbers discussed above; in addition, they have a matching colored light.

**Daymarks** are permanently placed signs attached to structures, such as posts, in the water. Common daymarks are red triangles (equivalent to nuns) and green squares (equivalent to cans). They may be lighted also.



## Red Right Returning

is a reminder of the correct course when returning from open waters or heading upstream.

## Non-Lateral Markers

Non-lateral markers are navigation aids that give information other than the edges of safe water areas. The most common are regulatory markers that are white and use orange markings and black lettering. These markers are found on lakes and rivers.



### Information

Squares indicate where to find food, supplies, repairs, etc., and give directions and other information.



### Controlled

Circles indicate a controlled area such as speed limit, no fishing or anchoring, ski only or no skiing, or “slow, no wake.”



### Exclusion

Crossed diamonds indicate areas off-limits to all vessels such as swimming areas, dams, and spillways.

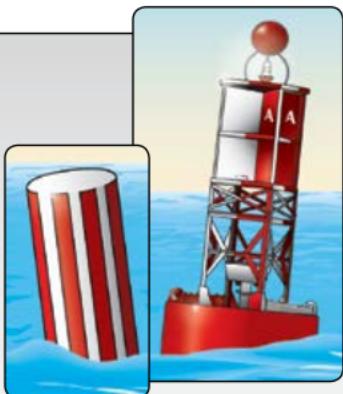
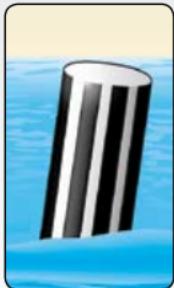


### Danger

Diamonds warn of dangers such as rocks, shoals, construction, dams, or stumps. Always proceed with caution.

## Other Non-Lateral Markers

**Safe Water Markers** are white with red vertical stripes and mark mid-channels or fairways. They may be passed on either side.



### Inland Waters

**Obstruction Markers** are white with black vertical stripes and indicate an obstruction to navigation. You should not pass between these buoys and the nearest shore.

## Mooring Buoy

Mooring buoys are white with a blue horizontal band and are found in marinas and other areas where vessels are allowed to anchor.



## Weather Emergencies

Weather can change very rapidly and create unexpected situations for boat operators. Even meteorologists have trouble predicting rapid weather changes. You should always monitor weather developments. One way is to use a VHF radio.

## What to Do if Caught in Severe Weather

### ■ Prepare the boat to handle severe weather.

- Slow down, but keep enough power to maintain headway and steering.
- Close all hatches, windows, and doors to reduce the chance of swamping.
- Stow any unnecessary gear.
- Turn on your boat's navigation lights. If there is fog, sound your fog horn.
- Keep bilges free of water. Be prepared to remove water by bailing.
- If there is lightning, disconnect all electrical equipment. Stay as clear of metal objects as possible.

### ■ Prepare your passengers for severe weather.

- Have everyone put on a USCG-approved life jacket (PFD). If passengers are already wearing their PFDs, make sure they are secured properly.
- Have your passengers sit on the vessel floor close to the centerline for their safety and to make the boat more stable.

### ■ Decide whether to go to shore or ride out the storm.

- If possible, head for the nearest shore that is safe to approach. If already caught in a storm, it may be best to ride it out in open water rather than try to approach the shore in heavy wind and waves.
- Head the bow into the waves at a 45-degree angle. PWCs should head directly into the waves.
- If the engine stops, drop a "sea anchor" on a line off the bow to keep the bow headed into the wind and reduce drifting while you ride out the storm. In an emergency, a bucket will work as a sea anchor.
- If the sea anchor is not sufficient, anchor using your conventional anchor to prevent your boat from drifting into dangerous areas.

# Specifically for PWCs

Although a personal watercraft (PWC) is considered an inboard vessel and comes under the same rules and requirements of any other vessel, there are specific considerations for the PWC operator.

## steering control



## steering nozzle

## Steering and Stopping a PWC

- PWCs are propelled by drawing water into a pump and then forcing it out under pressure through a steering nozzle at the back of the unit. This “jet” of pressurized water is directed by the steering control—when the steering control is turned, the steering nozzle turns in the same direction. For example, if the steering control is turned right, the nozzle turns right and the jet of water pushes the back of the vessel to the left, which causes the PWC to turn right.

### Remember—no power means no steering control...

Most PWCs and other jet-drive vessels must have power in order to maintain control. If you allow the engine on a PWC or other jet-propelled vessel to return to idle or shut off during operation, you may lose all steering control. Many PWCs will continue in the direction they were headed before the engine was shut off, no matter which way the steering control is turned. New PWCs allow for off-throttle steering.

- Most PWCs do not have brakes.** Always allow plenty of room for stopping. Just because you release the throttle or shut off the engine does not mean you will stop immediately. Even PWCs that have a braking system do not stop immediately.

## Ignition Safety Switches

- Most PWCs and powerboats come equipped by the manufacturer with an important device called an emergency ignition safety switch. This is a safety device that is designed to shut off the engine if the operator is thrown from the proper operating position.
- A lanyard is attached to the safety switch and the operator's wrist or PFD. The safety switch shuts off the engine if the operator falls off the PWC or out of the powerboat. If your vessel does not come equipped with an ignition safety switch, you should have one installed.
- In many states, it is illegal to ride your PWC without attaching the lanyard properly between the switch and yourself.



## Reboarding a Capsized PWC

After a fall, the PWC could be overturned completely. You should be familiar with the proper procedure to right the PWC and to reboard from the rear of the craft.

- Most manufacturers have placed a decal at the rear or bottom of the craft that indicates the direction to roll your PWC to return it to an upright position. If no decal exists, check your owner's manual or ask the dealer. If you roll it over the wrong way, you could damage your PWC.
- Practice reboarding with someone else around to make sure you can handle it alone. Don't ride your PWC if you are very tired because reboarding will be difficult. Also, avoid riding where there are strong currents or winds, which could hamper your reboarding efforts.



## Courtesy When Encountering Other Vessels

- Jumping the wake of a passing boat, or riding too close to another PWC or boat, creates risks and is restricted or even prohibited in some states. The vessel making the wake may block the PWC operator's view of oncoming traffic and also conceal the PWC operator from approaching vessels.
- Excessive noise from PWCs often makes them unwelcome with other vessel operators and people on shore. Be a courteous PWC operator.
  - Vary your operating area, and do not keep repeating the same maneuver.
  - Avoid congregating with other PWC operators near shore, which increases annoying noise levels.
  - Avoid making excessive noise near residential and camping areas, particularly early in the morning.
  - Avoid maneuvers that cause the engine exhaust to lift out of the water because that increases noise levels.
  - Do not modify your engine exhaust system if it increases the noise. Improperly modified exhausts will not make your PWC faster and may raise the noise to an illegal level.

## Environmental Considerations

When operating your personal watercraft, consider the effect you may have on the environment.

- Make sure that the water you operate in is at least 30 inches deep. Riding in shallow water can cause bottom sediments or aquatic vegetation to be sucked into the pump, damaging your PWC and the environment.



- Avoid causing erosion by operating at slow speed and by not creating a wake when operating near shore or in narrow streams or rivers.
- Do not dock or beach your PWC in reeds and grasses. This could damage fragile environments.
- Take extra care when fueling your PWC in or near the water. Oil and gasoline spills are very detrimental to the aquatic environment. Fuel on land if possible.
- Never use your PWC to disturb, chase, or harass wildlife.

## Other PWC Considerations

- Remember that everyone on board a PWC must wear a life jacket (PFD).
- Keep hands, feet, loose clothing, and hair away from the pump intake area. Before cleaning debris away from the pump intake, be sure to shut off the engine.
- Keep everyone clear of the steering nozzle unless the PWC is shut off. The water jet can cause severe injuries.
- Frequently inspect your PWC's electrical systems (e.g., starter and engine gauge connections) to ensure there is no potential for electrical spark. Gas fumes could collect in the engine compartment and an explosion could occur. After fueling, sniff the engine compartment for any evidence of gas fumes.
- Never exceed the manufacturer's recommended capacity for your PWC.
- Know your limits, and ride according to your abilities.
- See page 44 for other requirements specific to PWCs.



# Before Going Out

All operators are required to obey laws that regulate your vessel's registration and operation.

## Registering Your Vessel

- You must have an Idaho Certificate of Registration/Number and validation stickers to operate your vessel legally on Idaho waters. The only exceptions are:
  - Manually propelled vessels (for example: canoes, rafts, and kayaks)
  - Float tubes (without a motor)
  - Sailboards
  - Vessels properly registered in another state and using Idaho waters for 60 or fewer consecutive days
  - Vessels documented by the U.S. Coast Guard
- All sailboats, whether power-driven or under sail, need to be registered.
- *The original Certificate of Registration or registration renewal must be on board and available for inspection by an enforcement officer whenever the vessel is operated.*
- The registration number and validation stickers must be displayed as follows.
  - Number must be painted, applied as a decal, or otherwise affixed to both sides of the bow, as high above the waterline as possible.
  - Number must read from left to right on both sides of the bow.
  - Number must be in at least three-inch-high, vertical **BLOCK** letters.
  - Number's color must contrast sharply with the vessel's background.

THIS FORM MUST BE CARRIED ON THE VEHICLE / VESSEL HEREIN DESCRIBED DURING OPERATION.				
<b>ACTION:</b>				
<input type="checkbox"/> NEW	<input type="checkbox"/> DUPL. REG			
<input type="checkbox"/> RENEWAL	<input type="checkbox"/> EXEMPT			
<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSFER	<input type="checkbox"/> BOAT REG			
<input type="checkbox"/> NON-PROFIT	<input type="checkbox"/> MOTORBIKE REG			
<b>TYPE:</b>				
<input type="checkbox"/> SNOWMOBILE	<input type="checkbox"/> ID-SKI PERMIT			
<input type="checkbox"/> PERSONAL WATERCRAFT	<input type="checkbox"/> ID-BOAT AND PONTOON PERMIT			
<input type="checkbox"/> BOAT REG	<input type="checkbox"/> BOAT REG			
<input type="checkbox"/> MOTORBIKE REG	<input type="checkbox"/> ATV REGISTRATION			
EXPIRATION DATE	REGISTRATION NUMBER			
VALIDATION STICKER #				
YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	DESCRIPTION	COLOR
PRIMARY OWNER NAME (LAST, FIRST, MI)		PHONE #		
MAILING ADDRESS				
CO-OWNER NAME (LAST, FIRST, MI)		PHONE #		
USE DESIGNATION	PRIMARY USE	SECONDARY USE		
STATE OF PRINCIPAL USE:	USE AREA	USE AREA		
BOATS ONLY	USE TYPE	HULL	PROP	FUEL
LENGTH FT IN				
APPLICANT MUST SIGN TO BE VALID				
DATE OF ISSUE				
VENDOR S/F				
AGENT INITIALS				
FEES				
REG. FEE:	\$			
VENDOR FEE:	\$			
TOTAL FEE:	\$			



**Spaces or hyphens  
should appear here.**

### Validation Sticker



- Letters must be separated from the numbers by a space or hyphen equal to the letter width:  
**ID 3717 ZW or ID-3717-ZW.**
- No other numbers may be displayed on either side of the bow.
- One sticker must be affixed to each side of the vessel. It must be within six inches of and in line with the registration number and may be placed to either side of the registration number. Expired stickers must be removed or covered completely by the new sticker.

### Where to Register

Registration application forms can be obtained from:

- The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
- Boat registration vendors
- Any county assessor's or motor vehicle office

Submit your registration application and fee to:

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation  
Registration Section  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0065

**Registration Questions?** Visit the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) website at [www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov](http://www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov) or call IDPR at **1-800-247-6332**. Also, you can call or visit your County Sheriff or an IDPR office.

## Fees to Register Your Vessel

Vessels up to 12 feet in length .....	\$20.00
Vessels 12 feet in length or longer .....	\$20.00 plus \$2.00/foot over 12 feet
Idaho Invasive Species Fund .....	\$10.00
Vessels owned by a non-profit organization .....	\$2.00
<i>An administrative fee of \$1.50 may be added to each registration.</i>	

## Other Facts About Titling and Registering

- The following vessels *must be titled*:
  - Any vessel with a permanently attached mode of propulsion and model year 2000 or newer (for example: inboards, stern drives, personal watercraft, and sailboats)
  - Vessels over 12 feet in length with an outboard motor
- The Certificate of Registration expires on December 31 of each year. Renewal notices are mailed to owners of previously registered vessels. You may renew by mail, on the Internet, or at a boat license vendor or county motor vehicle (MVD) office.
  - **By mail:** Send Part A of the renewal form and your renewal fee to the IDPR, Registration Section.
  - **On the Internet:** Go to [www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov](http://www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov), and click on "Registrations and Permits." You will need the personal identification number (PIN) and sticker number shown on the renewal form.
  - **At a vendor or MVD office:** Take the entire renewal form to any boat license vendor or county MVD office. After you pay the renewal fee, the registration form will be validated and you will receive your new registration stickers.
- If you have questions about renewing your registration, call the IDPR's Registration Section at **1-800-247-6332**.
- If you change your address; if you sell, abandon, or destroy your vessel; or if your vessel is stolen, you must contact IDPR within 15 days.
- If you lose or destroy your Certificate of Registration or validation stickers, you must apply to IDPR for a duplicate and submit a processing fee.
- Larger recreational vessels owned by U.S. citizens may (at the option of the owner) be documented by the U.S. Coast Guard. Call the USCG at **1-800-799-8362** for more information.

## Buying or Selling a Vessel

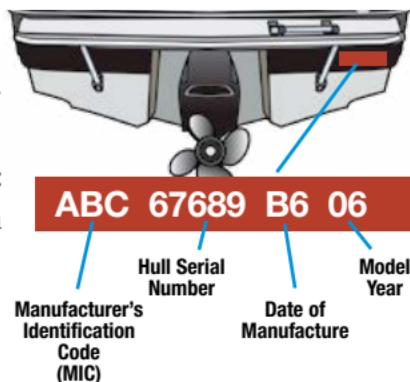
The procedure for transferring ownership of a vessel is outlined here. The steps are essentially the same whether the buyer is purchasing the vessel from a marine dealer or from an individual.

- If a registered vessel is sold or transferred to another person, the buyer must apply for a new Certificate of Registration.
  - If the Idaho registration is still valid, the buyer must apply anyway and pay a small fee for the registration to be transferred to his or her name.
  - If the registration has expired or the purchased vessel is new, the buyer must purchase a new registration.
  - The registration number stays with the vessel as long as it is registered in Idaho—the number is never assigned to another vessel.
- If a registered vessel is sold or otherwise transferred to another person, the seller is required to report the transaction to the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation within 15 days from the date of sale.

## Hull Identification Number

The Hull Identification Number (HIN) is a unique, 12-digit number assigned by the manufacturer to vessels built after 1972.

- Hull Identification Numbers:
  - Distinguish one vessel from another.
  - Are engraved in the fiberglass or on a metal plate permanently attached to the transom, or are printed on inflated rafts and kayaks.
- You should write down your HIN and put it in a place separate from your vessel in case warranty problems arise or your vessel is stolen.



## Operator Age and Education Requirements

- Although there is no statewide law specifying a minimum age to operate a vessel, all operators must be competent and are held responsible for knowing the navigation rules. In addition, there are local age regulations, for example in Benewah, Bonner, and Kootenai counties. Be sure to contact the counties and cities where you plan to boat about their local ordinances.
- Idaho law requires boater education under these conditions.
  - Personal watercraft (PWC) rental businesses must provide education to each person who will ride and operate the PWC. The operator of the PWC must carry a verification wallet card. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation provides the education materials to rental businesses.
  - In addition to penalties, boat operators are required to pass a boating course if they are convicted of operating under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
  - Boat operators who are repeat offenders of any boating law or rule also are required to pass a boating course.

## Marine Events

If an event is being held on Idaho waters, you must apply for a permit from the county sheriff who has jurisdiction over the waters at least 30 days prior to the event.

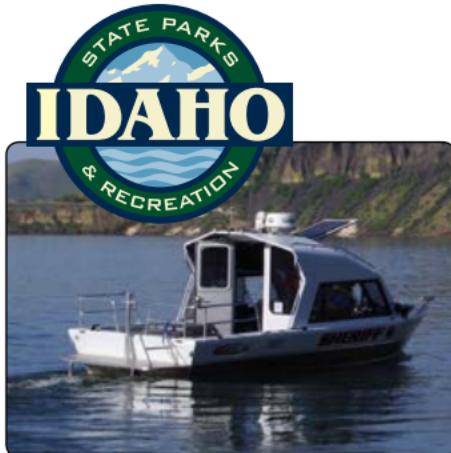


## Local Regulations

County and city governments may have additional regulations governing the operation of vessels on waters within their jurisdictions. Contact the local sheriff's department to learn of any special restrictions in the county where you will be boating.

## Enforcement

- The boating laws of Idaho are enforced primarily by sheriffs and deputy sheriffs of the county having jurisdiction over the waterway. All Idaho peace officers have the authority to stop and board vessels in order to check for compliance with federal and state laws.
- The U.S. Coast Guard has enforcement authority on federally controlled waters. Visit the IDPR website at [www.boatidaho.gov](http://www.boatidaho.gov) or call the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation headquarters at **208-334-4199** for the list of federally controlled waters in Idaho.
- Written reports of accidents involving only property damage must be made within 10 days of the accident. However, you must file an accident report within 48 hours in cases involving a death, disappearance, or injury.



## Courtesy Vessel Inspection

Idaho boat enforcement officers will perform a courtesy safety check of your vessel and equipment free of charge. You can contact your county sheriff to arrange for a safety check. If your vessel meets all state requirements, you will receive an Idaho inspection sticker.



# Required Equipment

When preparing to go out on a vessel, the operator must check that the legally required equipment is on board.

## Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

- All recreational vessels must have at least one Type I, II, or III personal flotation device (life jacket) that is U.S. Coast Guard–approved and of the proper size for each person on board or being towed. Sizing for PFDs is based on body weight and chest size.
- In addition to the above requirement, vessels 16 feet in length or longer (except canoes and kayaks of any length) must have one U.S. Coast Guard–approved Type IV PFD on board and readily accessible.
- Children 14 years of age or younger, on board vessels 19 feet or less, must *wear* an approved life jacket when the vessel is underway.
- Seaplanes, sailboards, and certain racing vessels are exempt from the above PFD requirements. Fly-fishing float tubes do not require PFDs on lakes with less than 200 surface acres. Fly-fishing pontoons do require PFDs on all Idaho waters.
- Each person riding on a personal watercraft must *wear* a U.S. Coast Guard–approved Type I, II, or III personal flotation device.
- Each person being towed behind a vessel must *wear* a U.S. Coast Guard–approved personal flotation device.
- Besides being USCG–approved, all PFDs must be:
  - *In good and serviceable condition.*
  - *Readily accessible*, which means you are able to put the PFD on quickly in an emergency.
  - *Of the proper size for the intended wearer.*



### TYPE I: Offshore Life Jackets

These vests are geared for rough or remote waters where rescue may take awhile. They provide the most buoyancy, are excellent for flotation, and will turn most unconscious persons face up in the water.



### TYPE II: Near-Shore Vests

These vests are good for calm waters when quick rescue is likely. A Type II may not turn some unconscious wearers face up in the water.



### TYPE III: Flotation Aids

These vests or full-sleeved jackets are good for calm waters when quick rescue is likely. They are not recommended for rough waters since they will not turn most unconscious persons face up.



### TYPE IV: Throwable Devices

These cushions and ring buoys are designed to be thrown to someone in trouble. Since a Type IV is not designed to be worn, it is neither for rough waters nor for persons who are unable to hold onto it.



### TYPE V: Special-Use Devices

These vests, deck suits, hybrid PFDs, and others are designed for specific activities such as windsurfing, kayaking, or water-skiing. *To be acceptable, Type V PFDs must be used in accordance with their label.*

## Navigation Lights

The required navigation lights must be displayed between sunset and sunrise and during periods of restricted visibility.

### Power-Driven Vessels When Underway

If less than **65.6 feet long**, these vessels must exhibit the lights as shown in illustration 1. Remember, power-driven vessels include sailboats operating under engine power. The required lights are:

- Red and green sidelights visible from a distance of at least two miles away—or if less than 39.4 feet long, at least one mile away—on a dark, clear night.
- An all-round white light (if less than 39.4 feet long) or both a masthead light and a sternlight. These lights must be visible from a distance of at least two miles away on a dark, clear night. The all-round white light (or the masthead light) must be at least 3.3 feet higher than the sidelights.

### Unpowered Vessels When Underway

Unpowered vessels are sailboats or vessels that are paddled, poled, or rowed.

- If less than **65.6 feet long**, these vessels must exhibit the lights as shown in illustration 2. The required lights are:
  - Red and green sidelights visible from at least two miles away—or if less than 39.4 feet long, at least one mile away.
  - A sternlight visible from at least two miles away.
- If less than **23.0 feet long**, these vessels should:
  - If practical, exhibit the same lights as required for unpowered vessels less than 65.6 feet in length.
  - If not practical, have on hand at least one lantern or flashlight shining a white light as in illustration 3.

### All Vessels When Not Underway

All vessels are required to display a white light visible in all directions whenever they are moored or anchored outside a designated mooring area between sunset and sunrise.

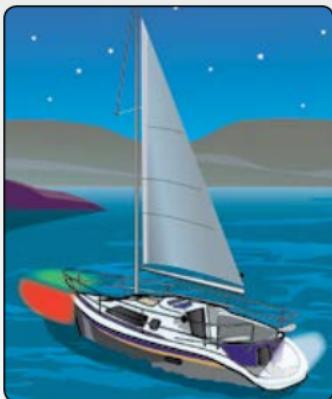
## 1. Power-Driven Vessels Less Than 65.6 Feet



The masthead light and sternlight may be combined as an all-round white light on vessels less than 39.4 feet long.



## 2. Unpowered Vessels Less Than 65.6 Feet



An alternative to the sidelights and sternlight is a combination red, green, and white light, which must be exhibited near the top of the mast.

## 3. Unpowered Vessels Less Than 23.0 Feet



Vessel operators should never leave shore without a flashlight. Even if you plan to return before dark, unforeseen developments might delay your return past nightfall.

## Fire Extinguishers

- All vessels are required to have a Type B U.S. Coast Guard-approved fire extinguisher on board if one or more of the following conditions exist.
  - Length of the vessel is 26 feet or more
  - Vessel has closed compartments
  - Vessel is powered by an inboard or stern drive engine
  - Vessel is carrying passengers for hire
- Approved types of fire extinguishers are labeled—"Marine Type USCG Approved"—followed by the type and size symbols and the approval number.
- Extinguishers should be placed in an accessible area—not near the engine or in a compartment. Check all extinguishers regularly to make sure they are charged.

## Fire Extinguisher Requirements

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Foam</b>	<b>Carbon Dioxide</b>	<b>Dry Chemical</b>
type & size	minimum gallons	minimum pounds	minimum pounds
B-I	1¼	4	2
B-II	2½	15	10
<b>Length of Vessel</b>	<b>Without Fixed System</b>	<b>With Fixed System*</b>	
Less than 26 ft.	one B-I	None	
26 ft. to less than 40 ft.	two B-I <b>or</b> one B-II	one B-I	
40 ft. to less than 65 ft.	three B-I <b>or</b> one B-II and one B-I	two B-I <b>or</b> one B-II	

\* refers to a permanently installed fire extinguisher system

## Backfire Flame Arrestors

Backfire flame arrestors are designed to prevent the ignition of gasoline vapors in case the engine backfires.

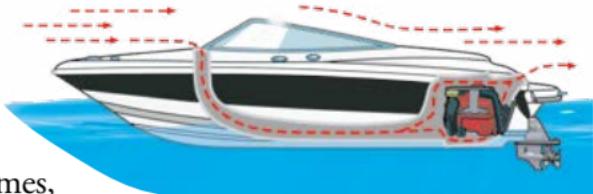
- All powerboats (except outboards) that are fueled with gasoline must have one of the following:
  - A backfire flame arrestor on each carburetor. Arrestors must be USCG-approved (must comply with SAE J-1928 or UL 1111 standards) and marked accordingly.
  - An arrangement of the carburetor or engine air induction system that safely disperses any flames from a backfire to the atmosphere outside the vessel.

- Paper or automotive filters are not USCG-approved and are dangerous to use.

## Ventilation Systems

The purpose of ventilation systems is to remove flammable gases, greatly reducing the chance of a life-threatening explosion.

- All gasoline-powered vessels, constructed in a way that would entrap fumes, must have at least two ventilation ducts fitted with cowls to remove the fumes.
- If your vessel is equipped with a power ventilation system, turn it on for at least four minutes both after fueling and before starting the engine.
- If your vessel is not equipped with a power ventilation system (for example, a personal watercraft), open the engine compartment and sniff for gasoline fumes before starting the engine.



## Mufflers and Noise Limits

- All vessel engines must have an effective, permanently installed muffling system that cannot be bypassed.
  - Vessels built before January 1, 1995, must not exceed 90 dB(A) using the stationary test.
  - Vessels built on or after January 1, 1995, must not exceed 88 dB(A) using the stationary test.
  - While operating on lakes and rivers wider than 500 feet, it is unlawful to exceed 75 dB(A) as measured from shore.
- Contact your local sheriff's department for a free screening of your vessel's noise.

## Sound-Producing Devices

In periods of reduced visibility or whenever a vessel operator needs to signal his or her intentions or position, a sound-producing device is essential.

- Vessels less than 65.6 feet in length, which includes PWCs, are required to carry on board a whistle or horn or some other means to make an efficient sound signal audible for at least one-half mile.
- Vessels that are 65.6 feet or more in length are required to carry on board a whistle or horn, *and* a bell that are audible for at least one mile.

## Visual Distress Signals (VDSs)

Visual Distress Signals (VDSs) allow vessel operators to signal for help in the event of an emergency.

- In Idaho, visual distress signals are not required unless you are on federally controlled waters. For a complete list of the locations in Idaho, visit the IDPR website at [www.boatidaho.gov](http://www.boatidaho.gov) or call **208-334-4199**.
- Vessels on federally controlled waters must be equipped with visual distress signals that are U.S. Coast Guard-approved, in serviceable condition, and readily accessible.
- All vessels, regardless of length or type, are required to carry night signals when operating between sunset and sunrise. Most vessels must carry day signals also; exceptions to the requirement for day signals are:
  - Recreational vessels less than 16 feet in length
  - Non-motorized open sailboats less than 26 feet in length
  - Manually propelled vessels
- If pyrotechnic VDSs are used, they must be dated. Expired VDSs may be carried on board, but a minimum of three unexpired VDSs must be carried in the vessel.
- The following combinations of signals are examples of VDSs that could be carried on board to satisfy U.S. Coast Guard requirements:
  - Three handheld red flares (day and night)
  - One handheld red flare and two red meteors (day and night)
  - One handheld orange smoke signal (day), two floating orange smoke signals (day), and one electric light (night only)

## 34 It's the Law!

- It is prohibited to display visual distress signals while on the water unless assistance is required to prevent immediate or potential danger to persons on board.

VDSs are classified as day signals (visible in bright sunlight), night signals (visible at night), or both day and night signals. VDSs are either pyrotechnic (smoke and flames) or non-pyro-technic (non-combustible).



### Pyrotechnic Visual Distress Signals

**Orange Smoke—Handheld**

**Orange Smoke—Floating**

*Day Signal*

**Red Meteor**

*Day and Night Signal*

**Red Flare**

*Day and Night Signal*

### Non-Pyrotechnic Visual Distress Signals

**Electric Light**

*Night Signal*

**Orange Flag**

*Day Signal*

### Federally Controlled Waters

Vessels must observe federal requirements on these waters:

- Coastal waters
- The Great Lakes
- Territorial seas
- Waters which are two miles wide or wider and are connected directly to one of the above

Visit [www.boatidaho.gov](http://www.boatidaho.gov) for the list of federally controlled waters in Idaho.



### Arm Signal

Although this signal does not meet VDS equipment requirements, wave your arms to summon help if you do not have other distress signals on board.

# On the Water

In addition to the laws mentioned previously, here are some other Idaho regulations that apply when vessel operators are on the water.

## Unlawful Operation

In Idaho, these dangerous operating practices are illegal.

■ **Negligent Operation** of a vessel is the failure to exercise the care necessary to protect the rights, safety, or property of others. Some examples of negligent operation are:

- Boating in an area where buoys or other markers clearly mark a swimming area or some other restricted area
- Becoming airborne while crossing the wake of another vessel at an unsafe distance from the vessel creating the wake
- Weaving through congested waterway traffic
- Swerving at the last possible moment in order to avoid a collision
- Causing danger or damage from the wake of your vessel
- Chasing, harassing, or disturbing wildlife with your vessel
- Riding on a seat back, gunwale, transom, or bow

### Remember—vessel owners are responsible...

As the owner of a vessel, you are liable if you consent to allow others to operate your vessel and they do so in an illegal or unsafe manner. It is presumed the vessel is being operated with your consent when it is under the control of your spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, or other immediate member of your family.

- **Failure to Regulate Speed** is operating at speeds that are too fast for the operator to bring the vessel to a stop within an assured clear distance ahead. It is illegal to exceed any posted speed limits. Specifically, the following acts are illegal:
  - Operating at a speed greater than “no wake speed” (maximum of five miles per hour) while within 100 feet of a dock, a swimmer, or a person in the water except when:
    - Safely pulling a water-skier from a dock
    - Safely dropping a water-skier at or near a dock
    - The swimmer or other person in the water is the vessel’s skier

**“No Wake Speed” or “Idle Speed”—**This is the slowest speed at which it is still possible to maintain steering, not to exceed five miles per hour.

- Operating at a speed and proximity to another vessel that requires the other operator to swerve at the last moment to avoid a collision
- **Overloading or Overpowering** is exceeding the carrying capacity or power limitations stated on the capacity plate installed by the vessel manufacturer, even if the vessel is a kayak or an inflatable raft.
  - You must not exceed the maximum allowed number of persons, maximum allowed pounds of persons, or maximum allowed combined persons and equipment.
  - If your vessel is powered by an outboard motor, you must not exceed the allowed horsepower.



## Alcohol and Drugs

Idaho law prohibits anyone from operating or being in actual physical control of any vessel while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicating substances. Alcohol and drugs cause impaired balance, blurred vision, poor coordination, impaired judgment, and slower reaction times.

- Idaho law states that a person is considered to be “under the influence” if he or she:

- Is 21 years of age or older and has a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08% or higher **or...**
- Is under 21 years of age and has a blood alcohol concentration of 0.02% or higher.

- Idaho law establishes the following penalties.

- Those convicted of operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs may:
  - Receive a maximum fine of \$1,000 and/or a sentence of six months in the county jail **and...**
  - Be required to attend and successfully complete a course on safe boating **and...**
  - Lose their privileges to operate a vessel for up to two years.
- A person causing great bodily harm, permanent disability, or permanent disfigurement to another person while operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs is guilty of a felony and will:
  - Be sentenced to the State Board of Corrections for up to five years, with a minimum of 30 days, **and...**
  - Be fined up to \$5,000 **and...**
  - Have his or her privileges to operate a vessel suspended for a minimum of one year, not to exceed two years, after release from prison.



Just remember this simple rule:  
***Don't Drink and Boat!***

- By operating a vessel on Idaho waters, you have consented to be tested for the presence of alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicating substances if requested by a peace officer. Any person refusing to submit to testing for the presence of alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicating substances will be assessed a civil penalty of \$200.

## Obstructing Navigation

- It is illegal to:
  - Operate any vessel in such a way that it will interfere unnecessarily with the safe navigation of other vessels.
  - Anchor a vessel in the traveled portion of a river or channel in a way that will prevent or interfere with any other vessel passing through the same area.
  - Moor or attach a vessel to a buoy (other than a mooring buoy), beacon, light, or any other navigational aid placed on public waters by proper authorities.
  - Move, displace, tamper with, damage, or destroy any navigational aid.
  - Obstruct a pier, wharf, boat ramp, or access to any facility.
  - Fail to obey the navigation rules found on pages 9–10.
  - Fish or sunbathe on docks where vessels are being launched or are otherwise in use by boaters.
- If you are operating a power-driven vessel in narrow channels or on fairways of the Western Rivers and are heading upstream (against the direction of the current), all vessels coming toward you from the opposite direction have the right-of-way and you must give way as necessary to permit safe passing.



## Homeland Security Restrictions

- Do not approach within 100 yards and slow to minimum speed within 500 yards of any U.S. Naval vessel. If you need to pass within 100 yards of a U.S. Naval vessel for safe passage, you must contact the vessel or the USCG escort vessel on VHF-FM channel 16.
- Observe and avoid all security zones. Avoid commercial port operation areas, especially those that involve military, cruise-line, or petroleum facilities.
- Observe and avoid other restricted areas near dams, power plants, etc.
- Do not stop or anchor beneath bridges or in the channel.
- Keep a sharp eye out for anything out of the ordinary, and report it to the closest authority.

## Boating Accidents and Casualties

- An operator involved in a boating accident must:
  - Stop his or her vessel *immediately* at the scene of the accident **and...**
  - Render aid to other persons affected by the accident **and...**
  - Give, in writing, his or her name, address, and vessel identification to the other vessel's operator and/or passengers.
- The operator or owner of a vessel involved in an accident must notify immediately, by the quickest means possible, the sheriff of the county in which the accident took place if any of the following occur:
  - A person dies or disappears **or...**
  - A person is injured **or...**
  - Damage to the vessel or other property exceeds \$1,500.
- Written reports of accidents involving only property damage must be made within 10 days of the accident. However, you must file an accident report within 48 hours in cases involving a death, disappearance, or injury.
- Boating accident report forms can be found at any sheriff's department office or by calling the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation at **208-334-4199**.

## Diver-Down Flag

- Scuba divers or snorkelers should display a diver-down flag that marks their diving area.
- Vessels must reduce speed to “no wake speed” while within 100 feet of the flag.
- Two types of flags are used to indicate diving activity.



**Divers Flag**

A rectangular red flag with a white diagonal stripe is used on Idaho state waters.



**Alfa Flag**

A blue and white International Code Flag A (or Alfa flag) must be displayed on vessels on federally controlled waters.

## Skier-Down Flag

Idaho law states that vessels towing person(s) on water skis or other similar devices must carry and use a red or orange skier-down flag, at least 12 x 12 inches in size, whenever the towed person(s) is in the water.

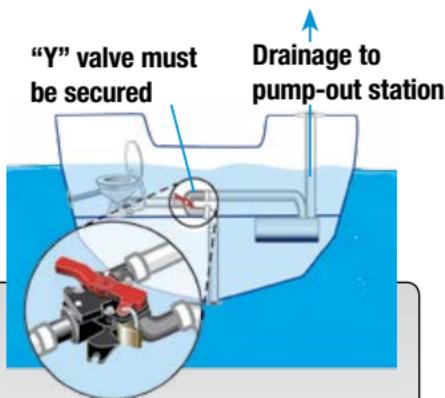


## Discharge of Trash

- It is illegal to dump refuse, garbage, or plastics into federally controlled or state waters. Store trash in a container on board, and place it in a proper receptacle on shore.
- Federal law requires you to display a 4 x 9-inch placard (sign) on any vessel 26 feet or longer. It must notify passengers and crew about discharge restrictions.

## Discharge of Sewage and Waste

- You are not required to have an installed toilet on your vessel. Many people use portable toilets and dispose of the waste at a public launch that has a pump-out station equipped for portable toilets.
- For long outings, equip your vessel with toilet facilities. See page 48 for a list of pump-out and sanitation sites.
- If your vessel does have an installed toilet, federal law requires a U.S. Coast Guard–certified marine sanitation device (MSD) that is working properly.



### Types of MSDs

- Types I and II MSDs treat waste with special chemicals to kill bacteria. If you have a Type I or II MSD, it must have a holding tank for untreated waste and a Y valve that must be secured in a closed position while operating in U.S. waters.
- Type III MSDs provide no treatment and are either holding tanks or portable toilets. Collected waste should be taken ashore and disposed of in a pump-out station or onshore toilet.

## Discharge of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances

- It is illegal to discharge oil or hazardous substances.
- You are not allowed to dump oil into the bilge of the vessel without means for proper disposal.
- You must dispose of oil waste at a reception facility. On recreational vessels, a bucket or bailer is adequate for temporary storage.
- If on federal waters, and your vessel is 26 feet or longer, you must display a 5 x 8-inch placard near the bilge pump switch stating the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

## Invasive Species

Eurasian watermilfoil, zebra mussels, quagga mussels, and New Zealand mud snails are some of the invasive species of concern in Idaho. Often spread between waterways by hitching a ride on vessels and trailers, these non-native species can damage the environment and hurt the economy.

- Due to the increasing threat of invasive species, the Idaho legislature passed The Idaho Invasive Species Act of 2008.
  - Possession or transport of aquatic invasive species (AIS) is prohibited by law. This includes things like weeds on a boat trailer, snails in bilge water, or zebra mussels on a boat motor.
  - Watercraft inspection stations have been established in locations throughout the state to ensure boats are free of AIS. All watercraft (including canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards) are required to stop if an open station is encountered. Inspection is quick and easy if the watercraft is clean, drained, and dry.
  - Anyone who violates the regulations in the act may be fined up to \$3,000, imprisoned in county jail for up to 12 months, or both. A person may receive additional civil penalties of up to \$10,000.
- Help prevent the spread of invasive species in Idaho by using this checklist every time you exit a body of water.
  - **Clean** any visible mud, plants, or animals from your boat.
  - **Drain** all water, including from the lower outboard unit, ballast, livewell, etc. Dispose of debris and bait in the trash.
  - **Dry** all areas of your boat and equipment.

Please visit [www.invasivespecies.idaho.gov](http://www.invasivespecies.idaho.gov), or call 1-877-336-8676 for more information.

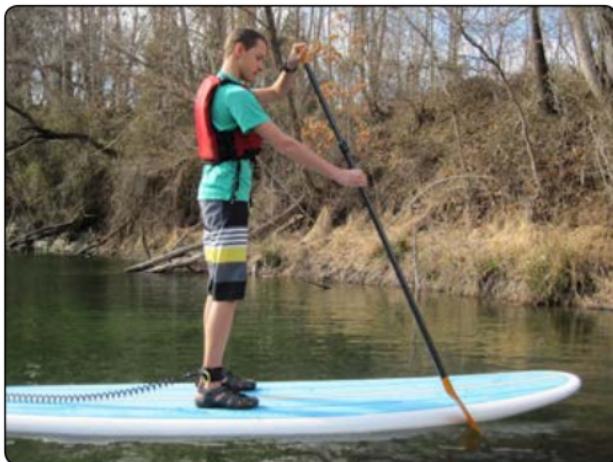
# Specifically for Paddleboards

The use of paddleboards on lakes and rivers is growing in popularity. The U.S. Coast Guard classifies paddleboards as vessels.

## Requirements for Paddleboards

When using a paddleboard beyond the narrow limits of a swimming, surfing, or bathing area, certain requirements apply.

- Paddleboard users must comply with recreational boating laws and rules.
- Paddleboards must have:
  - A life jacket for each person on board
  - A sound-producing device such as a whistle
  - Navigation lights when used between sunset and sunrise—this may be a flashlight or headlamp with a white light
  - An Idaho Invasive Species Fund sticker



# Specifically for PWCs

PWC operators must obey the laws that apply to other vessels as well as obey additional requirements that apply specifically to the operation of personal watercraft.

## Requirements for PWCs

- Each person riding on or being towed behind a PWC must *wear* a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, III, or V personal flotation device that is impact rated for the maximum speed of the PWC.
- An operator of a PWC equipped with a lanyard-type ignition safety switch must attach the lanyard to his or her person, clothing, or PFD.
- It is illegal to operate a PWC between sunset and sunrise or during periods of restricted visibility (such as fog) unless the PWC comes equipped by the manufacturer with the required navigation lights.
- PWCs must be operated in a reasonable and prudent manner at all times. For example, it is illegal to:
  - Weave your PWC through congested traffic.
  - Jump the wake of another vessel at an unsafe distance from the other vessel.
  - Swerve at the last moment to avoid a collision in order to splash another vessel or person.
  - Operate in a way that requires another vessel to swerve at the last possible moment to avoid a collision.
- A PWC operator should give way to any powerboat towing a skier by altering course and/or reducing speed to five miles per hour.
- It is illegal to chase, harass, or disturb wildlife with a PWC.



# Specifically for Skiing

Vessel operators towing a person(s) on water skis, an aquaplane, or other similar device must also obey these laws.

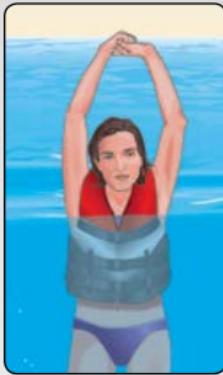
## Requirements for Towing Skiers

- Each person being towed behind a vessel must *wear* a USCG-approved PFD.
- It is illegal to tow a water-skier between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise.
- Every vessel towing a person(s) on water skis or a similar device must have a competent person, in addition to the vessel operator, continuously observing the towed person(s).
- If the towing vessel is a PWC, the PWC must be rated by the manufacturer for at least three people—the operator, the observer, and the retrieved skier.
- It is illegal to exceed “no wake speed” (maximum of five miles per hour) while within 100 feet of a dock, a swimmer, or a person in the water, except when:
  - You are safely pulling a water-skier from a dock **or...**
  - You are safely dropping a water-skier at or near a dock **or...**
  - The swimmer or person in the water is the vessel’s skier.
- Vessels towing a person(s) on water skis or a similar device must carry on board a red or orange skier-down flag. The observer must display the flag whenever the skier is in the water. See page 40.
- Vessel operators are responsible for the actions of any person they are towing.



## Hand Signals for Skiers

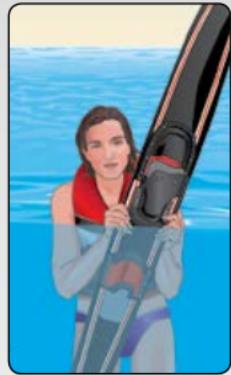
Knowing proper hand signals will help the skier(s) communicate with their boat operator or the observer.



**Skier OK**



**Stop**



**Skier down—watch!**



**Speed up**



**Slow down**



**Speed OK**



**Turn left**



**Turn right**

## Avoiding Propeller Strike Injuries

Most propeller strike accidents result from operator error.

Victims include swimmers, scuba divers, fallen water-skiers, and boat operators or passengers. Most propeller accidents can be prevented by following basic safe boating practices.

- Maintain a proper lookout. The primary cause of propeller strike accidents is operator inattention.
- Make sure the engine is off so that the propeller is not rotating when passengers are boarding or leaving a boat.
- Never start a boat with the engine in gear.
- Slow down when approaching congested areas and anchorages. In congested areas, always be alert for swimmers and divers.
- Learn to recognize warning buoys that mark swimming and hazardous areas.
- Keep the boat away from marked swimming and diving areas. Become familiar with the red and white or blue and white diver-down flags signaling that divers are below the surface.
- Make sure that passengers are seated properly before getting underway. Some operators of larger boats with several passengers have caused injuries by putting the engine in gear while people were still swimming or diving from the boat.
- Never ride on a seat back, gunwale, transom, or bow.

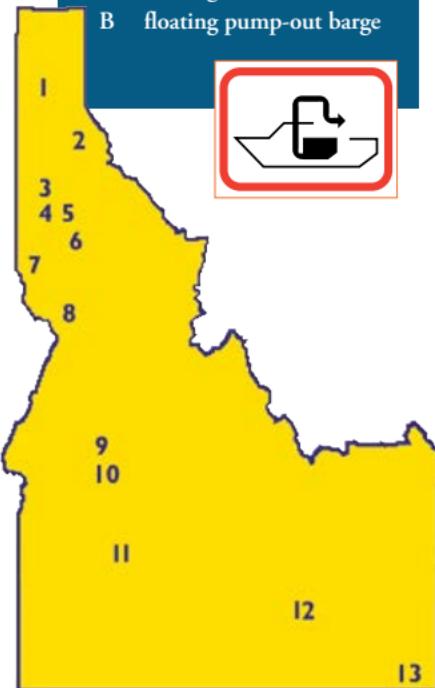
### Devices That Reduce Propeller Strikes

There are several new technologies designed to reduce propeller strikes. The effectiveness of the devices varies, depending on the boat and the operating environment. For more information, visit the U.S. Coast Guard's boating safety website: <http://www.uscgboating.org>.

# Idaho Boat Pump-Out and Sanitation Sites

Map #	Body of Water/ Facility	Services
<b>1</b> <b>Priest Lake</b>	Bishop's Marina ..... R Blue Diamond Marina ... R Priest Lake Marina (Kalispell Bay) ..... P	
<b>2</b> <b>Lake Pend Oreille</b>	Bottle Bay Marina Dover Bay Marina Garfield Bay Boat Launch Holiday Shores Marina Hope Marine Services MacDonald's Hudson Bay Marina ..... ▲ Kramer Marina Sandpoint City Beach Park/Marina (Windbag) Sandpoint Marina	
<b>3</b> <b>Lake Coeur d'Alene</b>	Boardwalk Marina Carlin Bay Resort Conkling Bay Resort Eleventh Street Marina Harrison Docks Rockford Bay Silver Beach Marina Third Street Docks	
<b>4</b> <b>Chatcolet Lake</b>	Heyburn State Park ..... R	
<b>5</b> <b>St. Joe River</b>	Aqua Park	
<b>6</b> <b>Dworshak Reservoir</b>	Big Eddy Marina ..... R Dent Acres ..... R Grandad ..... R Magnus Bay ..... FR	
<b>7</b> <b>Snake River</b>	Hells Gate State Park	
<b>8</b> <b>Salmon River</b>	Crumps Chevron ..... P Newin Ranch, North Fork P	
<b>9</b> <b>Payette Lake</b>	Mile High Marina	

Services Legend	
P	porta potty
▲	pump-out also equipped for portables
R	pump-outs with restrooms
FR	floating restrooms
B	floating pump-out barge



Map #	Body of Water/ Facility	Services
<b>10</b> <b>Lake Cascade</b>	Vanwick Boat Ramp..... P	
<b>11</b> <b>Lucky Peak Reservoir</b>	Spring Shores Marina (West Ramp) ..... ▲	
<b>12</b> <b>American Falls Reservoir</b>	Seagull Bay Boat Club	
<b>13</b> <b>Bear Lake</b>	Garden City Marina	

# Idaho Required Equipment Checklist

	PWC	Boat Less Than 16 Ft.	Boat 16 Ft. to Less Than 26 Ft.	Human Powered: Any Length
Certificate of Registration on Board	✓	✓	✓	
Validation Stickers Displayed	✓	✓	✓	
PFDs: Type I, II, or III	✓ 1	✓ 2	✓ 2	✓ 2
PFD: Type IV			✓	
Type B-I Fire Extinguisher	✓	✓	✓	
Backfire Flame Arrestor	✓	✓ 3	✓ 3	
Ventilation System	✓	✓	✓	
Muffler	✓	✓	✓	
Horn, Whistle, or Bell	✓	✓	✓	✓
Daytime Visual Distress Signals			✓ 4	
Nighttime Visual Distress Signals	5	✓ 4	✓ 4	
Navigation Lights	5	✓	✓	6

1. Each person riding on or being towed behind a PWC *must* wear a USCG–approved life jacket at all times.
2. Those 14 years of age or younger must *wear* an approved PFD at all times when underway in a vessel 19 feet or less in length.
3. Required on inboard and stern drives only.
4. Required on federally controlled waters. Visit [www.boatidaho.gov](http://www.boatidaho.gov) for the list of federally controlled waters in Idaho.
5. It is illegal to operate a PWC between sunset and sunrise or during periods of restricted visibility (such as fog), unless the PWC comes equipped by the manufacturer with the required navigation lights.
6. At least one lantern or flashlight between the hours of sunset and sunrise.

Visit My Boat at <http://www.boatidaho.gov> for an electronic version of the complete list of requirements.



For more information  
on boating in Idaho, contact:

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation  
Boating Program  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0065  
208-334-4199  
[www.boatidaho.gov](http://www.boatidaho.gov)