

PWCs

Hours (8 AM until sunset) “Sunset” means that time determined by the national weather service. The time of sunset will be posted on our website belpoa.org beginning in May.

Those less than 12 years of age may not legally operate a PWC.

Those 12 and 13 years of age may operate a PWC legally only if:

- He or she obtained a boating safety certificate prior to January 1, 1999, or ...
- *All of the following conditions are satisfied:*
 - The operator is accompanied solely by his or her parent or legal guardian **and ...**
 - Both the operator and the parent or legal guardian have obtained a boating safety certificate and ...
 - The PWC is equipped with a lanyard-type ignition safety switch and the parent or legal guardian has the lanyard attached to his or her person, clothing, or PFD.

Those 14 years of age or older and born after December 31, 1978, may operate a PWC legally only if they have obtained a boating safety certificate.

- Each person riding on or towed behind a PWC must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, or III PFD. Inflatable PFDs may not be used.
- You may not allow a child under 7 years of age to ride on or be towed behind a PWC unless with a parent or guardian or designee of the parent or guardian.
- The lanyard of a PWCs ignition safety switch must be attached to the person, clothing, or PFD of the operator.
- PWCs must be operated in a reasonable and prudent manner at all times. *It is illegal to:*
 - Jump the wake of another vessel unnecessarily close to the other vessel
 - Weave your PWC through congested traffic
 - Swerve at the last possible moment to avoid collision.
- A PWC must be operated at *slow-no wake speed* if crossing within 150 feet behind another vessel, unless the other vessel is also a PWC.
- It is illegal to harass wildlife or disturb aquatic vegetation with your PWC.

Boats & General Info

- **Travel around the lake is always counter-clockwise.**
- **Motorboats must give way to non-motorized vessels such as sailboats, rowboats and kayaks. In general, larger boats are to give way to smaller boats.**
- **Michigan law states that watercraft must stay at least 100 feet from shore, docks, rafts and anchored boats unless traveling at a no-wake speed (5 mph).**
- **Water skiing:**
 - A boat or personal watercraft pulling skiers, tubers, etc. must have a spotter—a person other than the driver—to watch those being towed.
 - It is illegal to tow persons on water skis, surfboards, or any device of this type between:
 - One hour after sunset if towed behind a boat
 - One hour before sunset if towed behind a PWC
- **Maximum boating speed is 55 miles per hour.**
- ***Watch your wake!* It can capsize a small boat and cause damage along the shoreline—for which the driver and owner of the boat can be liable.**
- **ALCOHOL/DRUGS**—It is illegal to operate a boat under the influence of intoxicating alcohol or controlled substances. The owner of a boat driven by a person under the influence can be held responsible.
- **Any skier, tuber, etc. being towed behind a boat should wear a life jacket**
- **Make sure each passenger has access to a floatation device, plus a “throw”**
- **Do not ride on the front deck of a pontoon boat, even in a no wake zone. Someone could fall off and get hit by the prop— this has happened!**
- **No wake means the slowest speed at which it is still possible to maintain steering and which does not create a wake. Keep it under 5 MPH and look behind you— if you are making a wake, you need to slow down.**
- **When turning never cut in front of another boat, let them through prior to turning.**
- **Turn on running lights a dusk. Also, if anchored turn on anchor light starting at dusk.**
- **NEVER NEVER turn on your head lights except for docking (that is what they are for). Head lights blind on coming boaters.**
- **Set an anchor line when stationary to avoid drifting into other boats and docks, and avoid stopping or fishing in main traffic lanes and turns on the main lake**
- **When approaching a busy area and unsure of other boaters, STOP!**

<http://www.boat-ed.com/mi/handbook/index.htm>