

SOUTH DAKOTA BOATING HANDBOOK



CURRENT POSITIONS

GOVERNOR

KRISTI NOEM

DEPARTMENT SECRETARY

KEVIN ROBLING

DEPARTMENT DEPUTY SECRETARY

SCOTT SIMPSON

WILDLIFE DIRECTOR

TOM KIRSCHENMANN

PARKS DIRECTOR

JEFF VANMEETEREN

ADMINISTRATION DIRECTOR

CHRIS PETERSON

Positions current at time of publication

GAME, FISH AND PARKS COMMISSIONERS

CHAIR

STEPHANIE RISSLER, VERMILLION

VICE CHAIR

TRAVIS BIES, FAIRBURN

JON LOCKEN, BATH

CHUCK SPRING, UNION CENTER

JULIE BARTLING, GREGORY

ROBERT WHITMYRE, WEBSTER

JIM WHITE, HURON

Positions current at time of publication



FACEBOOK.COM/SDGFP



@SDGAMEFISHPARKS



@SDGAMEFISHPARKS

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks receives Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior and its bureaus prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex (in educational programs). If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility, or if you desire further information please write to:

Office of Civil Rights, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240.

5,000 copies of this document were printed by Forum Printing at a rate of 59 cents per copy.

Printed in May 2023. For the most up-to-date version, please visit gfp.sd.gov/regulations.

WHAT'S NEW

- » As of April 1, 2021, the U.S. Coast Guard implemented a law passed by congress which requires operators of recreational vessels less than 26 feet in length to use an engine cut-off switch (ECOS) and associated ECOS link (ECOSL). **Section 10 Federally Navigable Waterways in South Dakota:**
- Big Sioux River - From Military Road (Old US Highway 77 bridge) at North Sioux City, South Dakota to its confluence with the Missouri River (Approximately 5 miles)
 - Big Stone Lake - State of South Dakota
 - Bois de Sioux River - From Lake Traverse in South Dakota to Wahpeton, North Dakota
 - James River - From Jamestown, North Dakota to its confluence with the Missouri River near Vermillion, South Dakota
 - Lake Traverse State of South Dakota
 - Missouri River - From its Headwaters near Three Forks, Montana downstream to the Iowa / Missouri state line on its eastern bank and the Nebraska / Kansas state line on its western bank
- » In the 1980s, the U.S. Coast Guard created four wearable life jacket “types” and one throwable flotation “type” for recreational boaters. Recently, the Coast Guard announced that life jackets would no longer be categorized by these “types”, but rather by “levels.” These “levels” will correspond approximately to the buoyancy the device provides in a unit called Newtons. These new standards align the United States with PFD requirements in Canada and other countries, while making labeling more effective at conveying safety information.

BOATING EDUCATION

Although boating education is not mandatory in South Dakota we continue to urge boaters to take an online boater education course. The information learned in this course typically equates to a safer boating experience on the water. Every boating season our Conservation Officers respond to boating accidents across the state that could have been prevented. Taking a boating education course is one of the best things you can do to prevent accidents on the water. Whether you are a first time boater or have years of experience, there is always more to learn.

U.S. Coast Guard statistics indicate that of the accidents where the level of operator education was known, 81% of boating deaths occurred on boats where the boat operator had never received boating education instruction.

South Dakota offers three certified online courses. These courses can be found at gfp.sd.gov/safety.



Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Why is it important to use an Engine Cut-Off Switch?

A: Boats can make sudden and forceful turns that create enough torque to eject an operator from the helm area or completely out of the boat. If thrown out of the boat, there is always the danger of a spinning propeller, especially since an unmanned boat can often start traveling in circles at the point where the ejection took place. Wearing your ECOSL immediately stops the engine and allows the operator to regain control of the boat.

Q: I just bought a new boat from the dealer and it is not registered yet. Can I take it out on the lake?

A: New boats purchased from a South Dakota boat dealer will have a temporary boat license that is valid for 30 days. According to Department of Revenue rules, the temporary license must be displayed on, or carried in, the boat.

Q: I would like to purchase a boat from a private seller and want to the test drive it prior to purchase. The problem is that the registration for the boat is expired. Can I test drive the boat on public waters with an expired registration?

A: No, but you can get a temporary permit which would allow you to legally operate the boat. A person in possession of a title either in his name or assigned to the person or a bill of sale which lists the person as a purchaser of the boat, may procure from any county treasurer a temporary permit for use in South Dakota waters. The title or bill of sale shall be available for inspection by any law enforcement officer if the boat is being used. The permit may be purchased for five to fifteen consecutive days at a fee of one dollar per day for each day the permit is required. The minimum permit fee is five dollars. The fee is payable to the county treasurer at the time of purchase.

GENERAL INFORMATION: 605.223.7660

TTY: 605.223.7684, email: wildinfo@state.sd.us

Aberdeen: 605.626.2391, 5850 E. Hwy 12
Chamberlain: 605.734.4530, 1550 E. King Ave.
 Ft. Pierre: 605.223.7700, 20641 SD Hwy 1806
Huron: 605.353.7145, 895 3rd Street SW
Mobridge: 605.845.7814, 909 Lake Front Drive

Pierre: 605.773.3387, 523 E. Capitol Ave.
Rapid City: 605.394.2391, 4130 Adventure Trail
Sioux Falls: 605.362.2700, 4500 S. Oxbow Ave.
Watertown: 605.882.5200, 400 West Kemp
Webster: 605.345.3381, 603 E. 8th Ave.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REMINDERS | PAGES 6-9

BOATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE
COMPLIANCE CHECKS
PADDLEBOARDING REQUIRES A LIFE JACKET
COLD TEMPERATURES AND COLD WATER

BEFORE THE WATER | PAGES 10-13

BOAT REGISTRATION, NUMBERING AND TITLING
HULL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER
VESSEL CAPACITY
WHERE TO GO
ONE-YEAR REGISTRATION FEES
WHO MAY OPERATE A VESSEL

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT | PAGES 14-17

LIFE JACKETS - PERSONAL FLOATION DEVICES (PFDS) AND THE DIFFERENT TYPES
FIRE EXTINGUISHERS
VENTILATION AND FLAME ARRESTOR REQUIREMENTS
MUFFLERS

GENERAL NAVIGATION | PAGES 18-23

RULES OF THE ROAD
CROSSING, OVERTAKING AND HEAD-ON SITUATIONS
STARBOARD-TO-STARBOARD PASSING
BOATING AT NIGHT AND NAVIGATION LIGHTS
BUOYS AND WATERWAY MARKERS
OBSTRUCTING NAVIGATION

PERSONAL WATERCRAFTS | PAGES 24-27

REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIC TO PERSONAL WATERCRAFTS
OPERATING A PERSONAL WATERCRAFT
COURTESY ON THE WATER

WATER LAWS AND REGULATIONS | PAGES 28-33

RECKLESS/CARELESS OPERATION
SAFETY AND REGULATIONS
BOATING WHILE IMPAIRED
ACCIDENTS ON THE WATER
TOWED WATERSPORTS AND TUBING
DIVER-DOWN FLAGS

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT | PAGES 34-35

OIL AND OTHER HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES
DISPOSING OF WASTE AND TRASH
CLEAN BOATING

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES | PAGES 36-39

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS) AND GENERAL AIS REGULATIONS

PUBLIC WATER ZONES | PAGE 40



REMINDERS

Boating Under the Influence (BUI)

Compliance Checks

Paddleboarding Requires a Life Jacket

Cold Temperatures and Cold Water

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

KEY REMINDERS

SOUTH DAKOTA BOATING HANDBOOK SUMMARIZES THE LAWS

This handbook summarizes South Dakota's boating laws and regulations. It does not present the actual laws and regulations. Laws and regulations are subject to change. Boaters may also be subject to federal and local government rules and restrictions. To view these laws in detail, please visit: sdlegislature.gov/statutes/Codified_laws/DisplayStatute.aspx?Statute=42-8&Type=StatuteChapter or sdlegislature.gov/Rules/DisplayRule.aspx?Rule=41:04:05&Type=All

BOATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE (BUI)

South Dakota law prohibits anyone from boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Alcohol is the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents. The state blood alcohol content legal limit for operating a vessel under the influence is .08. Alcohol is dangerous for passengers too. Intoxication can cause slips, falls overboard and other dangerous accidents. If you boat under the



influence of drugs or alcohol you are endangering your life and the lives of others. Just don't do it!

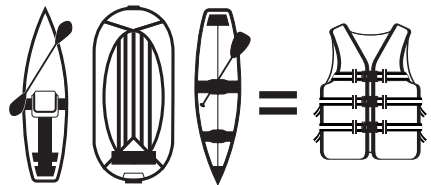
COMPLIANCE CHECKS

Law enforcement officers conduct routine boating safety inspections throughout the year in South Dakota. Boating safety inspections are in place to keep everyone on the water safe. During a boating safety inspection, an operator is asked to exhibit certain required safety equipment which is dependent on the size and type of boat being operated. Boat operators are expected to know the boating laws of the state and the equipment required for their vessel prior to starting any voyage.

PADDLEBOARDING REQUIRES A LIFE JACKET

A paddleboard is considered a watercraft in South Dakota and requires a life jacket on board for all users. Avoid paddling under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Learn how to get out of, hang on to and re-enter your capsized watercraft. Wear bright clothing, carry a whistle and paddle with a friend as safety increases in numbers. If you paddle alone, be sure to tell someone where you are going and when you will return.

COLD TEMPERATURES AND COLD WATER



The fall, winter and early spring can be some of the most beautiful times to be in the outdoors of South Dakota, but the weather can change in an

KEY REMINDERS

instant.

Therefore, you should take a few precautionary steps before you head out:

- » Always wear a life jacket when on or recreating near cold water.
- » Dress in several layers of clothing under your life jacket.
- » Wear water-resistant fabrics and layers that wick away moisture, and a waterproof outer layer.
- » If you fall into cold water, keep in mind the following:
 - Keep footwear and clothes on. Almost all clothing, even hip boots and waders, will float for an extended period of time.
- Do not thrash or move about. Excess motion consumes energy and increases loss of body heat.
- Draw your knees to your chest and your arms to your sides, protecting the major areas of heat loss.
- If others are in the water with you, huddle together with your arms around their shoulders.



STAGES OF COLD WATER IMMERSION

1. COLD SHOCK

- » Gasp reflex
- » Panic
- » Hyperventilation
- » Increased heart rate

2. MUSCLE FAILURE

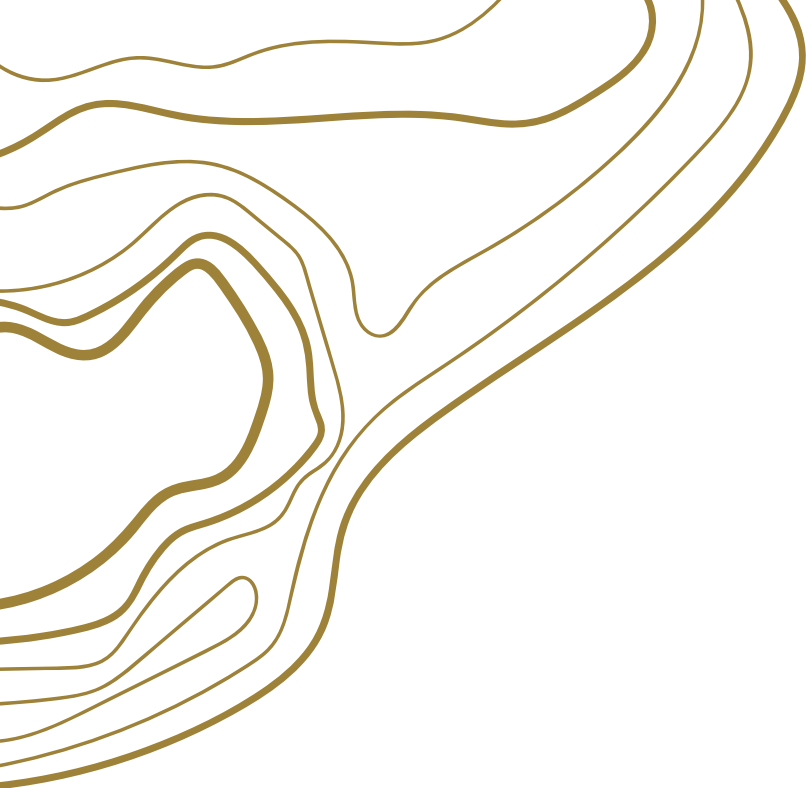
- » Loss of muscle coordination
- » Difficulty swimming, if you're able to swim at all

3. HYPOTHERMIA

- » Body temperature drops to dangerous levels
- » 75% of victims don't survive to this point

4. RESCUE DANGERS

- » Being removed from cold water can have short and long term effects on your body



BEFORE THE WATER

Boat Registration

Boat Numbering

Boat Titling

Hull Identification Number

Vessel Capacity

Where To Go

One-Year Registration Fees

Who May Operate a Vessel

BEFORE THE WATER

BOAT REGISTRATION

No one may operate or give permission to operate a nonmotorized boat over 12 feet in length or a motorboat of any length on South Dakota waters unless a valid registration decal is displayed on each side of the bow of the boat. The registration must always be available whenever the boat is in operation.

Exceptions:

- » Nonmotorized boats 12 feet or less in length.
- » Boats that are covered by a valid registration from another state that have not been in South Dakota for more than 60 consecutive days during any calendar year. Boats subject to a contract for a

berth for a period of 60 or more consecutive days during any calendar year in marina facilities located within South Dakota must be registered by the State of South Dakota.

- » Boats that are documented by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and used on South Dakota waters for less than 60 consecutive days during any calendar year. USCG documented boats subject to a contract for a berth for a period of 60 or more consecutive days during any calendar year in marina facilities located within South Dakota must be registered by the State of South Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA REGISTRATION				KEEP IN VEHICLE					
Pri Plate/Decal #	Title/Boat #	Body	Wgt/CC/Type	Co	Class/Power	F VC	Colors	Issue Date	Expiration Date
2005D00000060	SD813AA	WOO CABIN		36	2/10		TURPUR	5-1-2019	12-31-2020
Year	Make	VIN/HULL	Model/Length	Tons					
2014	ABC	4567890KA12	26FT 01N						
Other Owners				FEES					
				Description		LIC FEE:		45.00	
				GAURDIAN		COUNTY FEE:		1.00	
				AKA		TOTAL:		46.00	
GFP, SAMPLE				LESSOR					
523 E CAPITOL AVE STE 3									
PIERRE, SD 57501-3185									
				Your Signature X _____					

VOID
VOID

BOAT NUMBERING

No one may operate or give permission to operate a nonmotorized boat over 18 feet in length or a motorboat of any length on South Dakota waters unless the boat is numbered in accordance with state and federal law and the identifying number set forth in the certificate of number is displayed on each side of the bow of the boat:

- » The assigned number comprises the letters “SD” followed by a group of three (or four) numbers followed by two (or three) letters.
- » The owner must permanently and securely display the numbers on each side of the forward part of the boat so that the numbers are clearly visible and readable at a

BEFORE THE WATER

distance of 100 feet on a clear day without the aid of a magnifying device when the boat is on the water.

- » The number displayed must be a plain block design – script or cursive design is prohibited.
- » The number must be a color that contrasts with the color of the vessel and be placed to read from left to right.
- » A space equal to one letter or number must be left between

the letters “SD” and the group of three (or four) numbers that follows. Another space equal to one letter or number must be left between the group of three (or four) numbers and the final group of two (or three) letters.

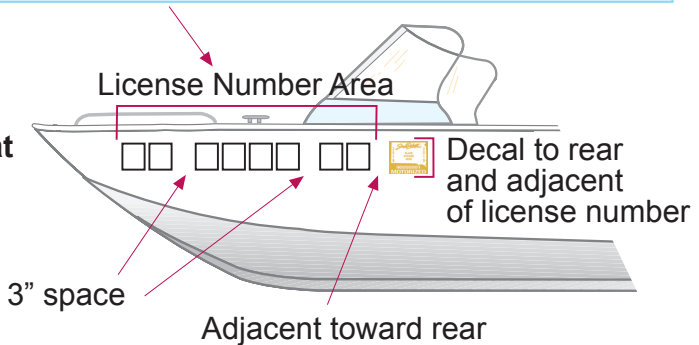
- » No numbers or letters other than those assigned may appear on the forward part of the boat.

License Number at least 3” high letters

3” {SD 1234 AB

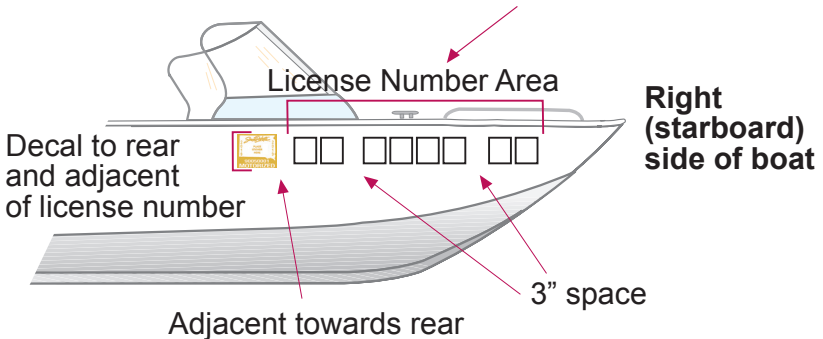


Left (port) side of boat



License Number at least 3” high letters

3” {  SD 1234 AB



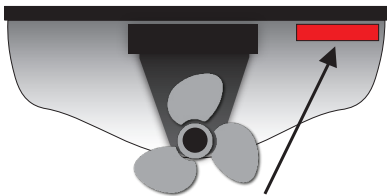
BEFORE THE WATER

BOAT TITLING

Boats over 12 feet in length or a motorboat of any length purchased or acquired by a resident of South Dakota on or after July 1, 1993, must also be titled. NOTE: canoes, inflatable boats, kayaks, sailboards, and seaplanes cannot be titled.

HULL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

A hull identification number (HIN) or serial number is vital in registering and titling your boat. HINs can be found on all boats manufactured since model year 1973. The letter-number combination is typically about 12 digits long and usually found on the right side of the stern or transom of the craft on the outside and may be stamped into the fiberglass or aluminum or appear on a separate plate.



Hull Identification Number (usually found on stern)

VESSEL CAPACITY

The boat's operator must limit the total horsepower, weight and maximum number of passengers to that shown on the capacity plate installed by the

boat's manufacturer. It is unlawful and dangerous to load or power your boat beyond its maximum capacity.

WHERE TO GO

Boat registration (including replacement registration/decals), numbering, and titling is handled at the county treasurer's office where you reside. Contact your local treasurer's office or call 605.773.3311 for more information. More information is available online at: dor.sd.gov/individuals/motor-vehicle/boats/

If a registration or validation decal is lost or destroyed, the owner must contact the county treasurer in their county of residence for a duplicate.

ONE-YEAR REGISTRATION FEES

Nonmotorized vessels more than 12 ft and vessels propelled only by electric motors - \$15

Motorboats less than 19 ft (includes personal watercraft) - \$25

Motorboats 19 feet long or longer - \$45

WHO MAY OPERATE A VESSEL

Operator under the age of 12	May not operate a motorboat propelled by a motor of more than 6 horsepower, unless a person 18 years or older is on board.
Operator under the age of 14	May not operate a personal watercraft (PWC), of any of horsepower, unless there is a person 18 years or older is on board.

It is illegal for the owner of a PWC or a motorboat to allow the vessel to be operated by an underage person.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Life Jackets - Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

Wearable Offshore Life Jackets (Type I)

Wearable Near-Shore Vests (Type II)

Wearable Flotation Aids (Type III)

Throwable Devices (Type IV)

Special-Use Devices (Type V)

Fire Extinguishers

Ventilation Requirement

Flame Arrestor Requirement

Mufflers



REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

LIFE JACKETS - PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES (PFDS)

Life jackets are required on boats operated on the public waters, as follows:

- » All boats less than 16 feet long and all canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards must have on board one U.S. Coast Guard-approved wearable PFD for each person;
- » All boats, other than canoes and kayaks and paddleboards, 16 feet long or over must have on board one U.S. Coast Guard-approved wearable PFD for each person and one U.S. Coast Guard-approved throwable device;
- » All boats towing persons on water skis, aquaplanes, knee boards, float tubes, air chairs, or similar devices must have on board a Coast Guard-approved wearable PFD for each person being towed, except if the person being towed is wearing a Coast Guard-approved PFD.
- » Inflatable PFDs are not approved for use with towed watersports, personal watercraft or persons under the age of 16.

If a boat is operated at greater than no-wake speed, the operator of the boat must assure that each child on board under seven years of age is wearing a U.S. Coast Guard-approved PFD unless the child is within a cabin or below deck;

A Special-Use device is acceptable only if it is worn at all times except when the person is below deck or in an enclosed cabin.

All required flotation devices must be in good condition, the appropriate size for the intended wearer, readily accessible, and USCG approved.

WEARABLE OFFSHORE LIFE JACKETS (TYPE I)

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. These vests are best in rough or remote waters.

WEARABLE NEAR-SHORE VESTS (TYPE II)

Usually looks like a horse collar and is worn like a bib. It has an unconscious turning ability similar to the offshore jackets, but it will not turn as many persons under the same conditions. They work well in calm waters when a quick rescue is likely.

WEARABLE FLOTATION AIDS (TYPE III)

Are usually foam-filled and come in several colors and styles, including full-sleeved jackets. They are not designed to turn an unconscious victim, but they do provide protection against exposure to cold water.

THROWABLE DEVICES (TYPE IV)

These are intended for use anywhere and designed to be thrown to a person in the water and grasped and held by the user until rescued. These are not devices that are worn. These devices can include buoyant cushions, ring buoys and horseshoe buoys.

SPECIAL-USE DEVICES (TYPE V)

These are intended for specific activities and may be carried instead of another life jacket only if used according to the condition for which it is approved (as shown on its label). Varieties of these devices include deck suits, work vests, sailboarding vests and certain inflatable life jackets.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT LIFE JACKET

REQUIREMENTS

- U.S. Coast Guard approved wearable life jacket on board for every person on the boat.
- Boating safety advocates recommend all boaters and passengers wear a life jacket at all times while boating.



READ THE LABEL

- All life jackets that are USCG approved have an approval number. Look for it to ensure your life jacket meets the law requirements and is safe.
- You may see a new label on the inside of new life jackets with a performance level icon. These are approved for use in the U.S. and Canada, whereas devices with the old labels continue to be approved in one country or the other, not both.
- Life jackets you may already own may have the old “type” life jacket label (Type I–Type V).
- The new label **DOES NOT** make obsolete life jackets with the old label (you can continue to use your life jacket as long as it is in good condition and appropriate for the activity).

RIGHT LIFE JACKET

- **WEAR IT**—The best life jacket is one you will wear.
- **ACTIVITY**—It should be appropriate for the recreational water activity.
- **FIT**—A snug fit is a proper fit. All straps, buckles, and zippers should be secure.
- **CONDITION**—Life jackets with a tear, broken pieces, or buoyancy loss should be disposed.



Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

SafeBoatingCampaign.com

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

A working fire extinguisher with the stamp of approval of the U.S. Coast Guard is required on motorboats and PWCs that have enclosed compartments (i.e. areas where gas vapors may be trapped, permanent gas tanks, etc.) when operated on public waters.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS REQUIRED			
Length of Vessel		Without Fixed System	With Fixed System*
Less than 26ft.		1 B-I	None
26ft. to less than 40 ft.		2 B-I or 1B-II	1 B-I
40 ft. to less than 65 ft.		3 B-I or 1 B-I and 1 B-II	2 B-I or 1B-II
Classification	Foam	Carbon Dioxide	Dry Chemical
Type and Size	Minimum Gallons	Minimum Pounds	Minimum Pounds
B-I	1 1/4	4	2
B-II	2 1/2	15	10

**Applies to vessels with a permanently installed fire extinguisher system*

VENTILATION REQUIREMENT

A motorboat using gas, except those of open construction, shall have a prescribed venting system for bilges and the fuel tank compartment.

FLAME ARRESTOR REQUIREMENT

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

MUFFLERS

All watercraft motors must have a muffler, underwater exhaust, or other device that suppresses the sound of the motor in a reasonable manner. The use of cutouts is prohibited, except for racing boats competing in a regatta or race as provided by adopted rules.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SOUND-PRODUCING DEVICES		
Length of Vessel	Sound-Producing Device	Sound Carry
16ft. to less than 26ft.	Whistle or signal	Half mile
26ft. to less than 40ft.	Power operated whistle	One mile
40ft. or more	Bell and power operated whistle	One mile

South Dakota law does not require watercrafts, including PWCs, less than 16 feet in length to carry a sound producing device.

GENERAL NAVIGATION

Rules of the Road

Crossing Situation

Overtaking Situation

Head-On Situation

Starboard-To-Starboard Passing

Boating at Night

Navigation Lights

Buoys and Waterway Markers

Obstructing Navigation



GENERAL NAVIGATION

RULES OF THE ROAD

Boaters call navigation rules – the basic laws governing the steering or sailing of a boat – “The Rules of the Road.” The Rules of the Road define the roles and responsibilities of vessel operators. If all operators obeyed these rules, most accidents could be avoided.

One of the reasons the Rules of the Road exist is to keep boats from colliding with each other and with other objects. Since collisions are the number one type of accident on the water, boaters should remember the following Rules of the Road:

Post a lookout. Designate someone to watch for dangers that may come from any direction.

Maintain a safe speed. Except where

speed is restricted by regulation or the waterway is marked by a “No Wake” or “Slow Speed” Aid, you must judge “safe speed” for yourself, taking into account visibility, vessel traffic, your boat’s ability to maneuver, and the weather conditions.

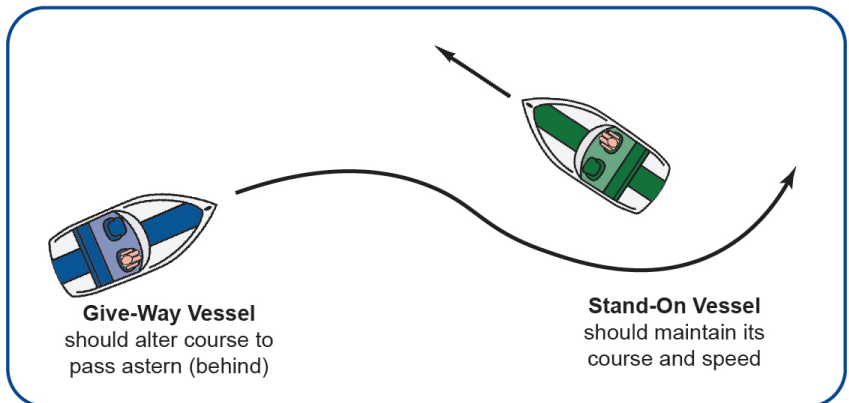
Avoid a collision. The Rules of the Road include the actions to take when encountering another vessel on the water. Some of the most common situations you may encounter are: overtaking, meeting head on, and crossing the bow of another vessel. In each case, the boat designated as the “give-way” vessel is required to yield to the other boat, while the boat designated as the “stand-on” vessel should maintain its course and speed.

CROSSING SITUATION

Action(s): In a crossing situation, the give-way vessel must act to avoid a collision. This may include altering its course to pass astern of the stand-on vessel or slowing down. The stand-on vessel should maintain its course and speed.

When two power-driven vessels are crossing so as to involve risk of collision, the vessel which has the other on her starboard side shall keep out of the way and shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, avoid crossing ahead of the other vessel.

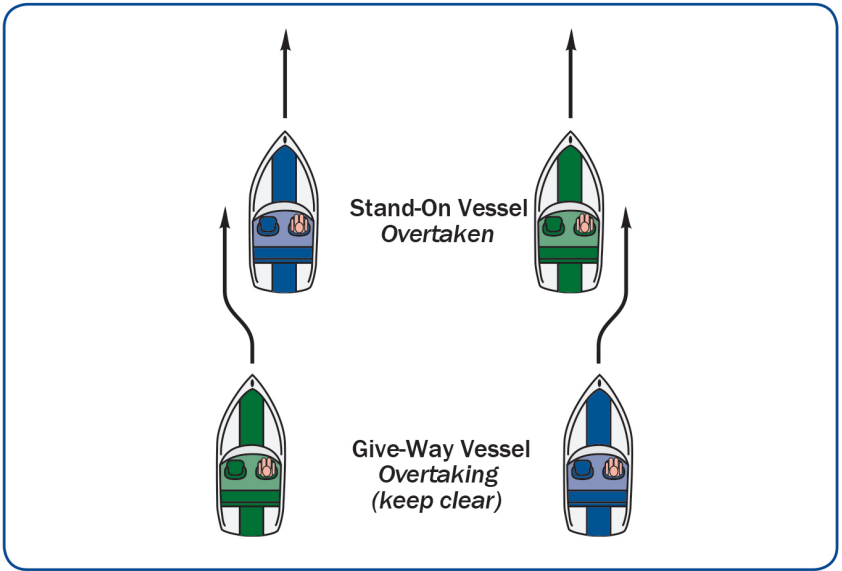
When meeting another boat, make early and substantial changes to your course. This helps the other operator understand your intentions.



GENERAL NAVIGATION

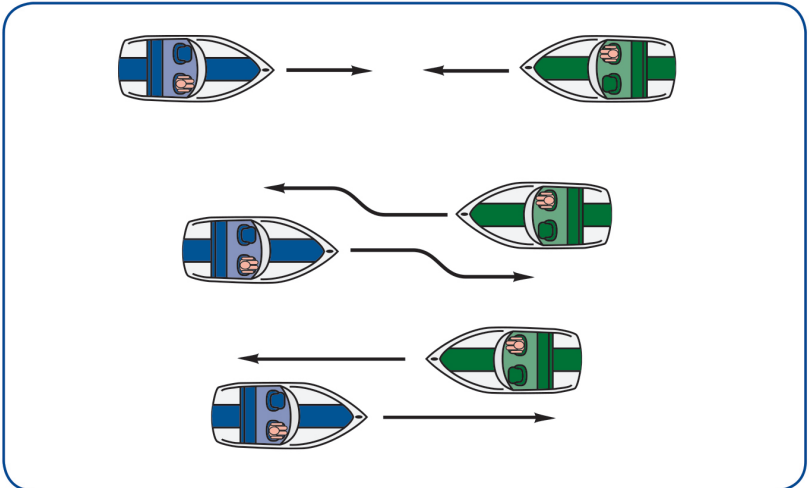
OVERTAKING SITUATION

Action(s): The give-way vessel (bottom) can pass on either side of the stand-on vessel (top).



HEAD-ON SITUATION

Port-to-Port Passing (preferred)

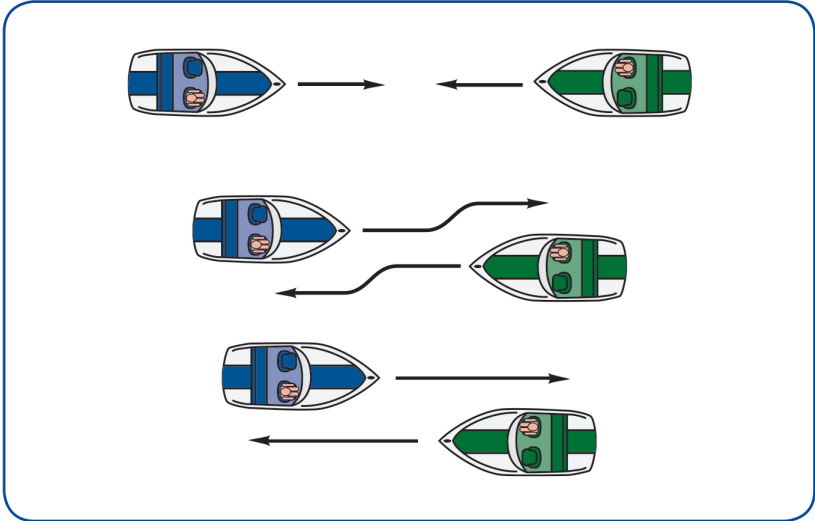


GENERAL NAVIGATION

STARBOARD-TO-STARBOARD PASSING

Action(s): When meeting another vessel head on, a port-to-port passing is preferred. Passing starboard to starboard is acceptable when necessary.

There is much more to the Navigation Rules. For more information, visit uscgboating.org, navcen.uscg.gov, or gfp.sd.gov/safety.



BOATING AT NIGHT

Boating at night can make familiar waters unrecognizable. Visual depth perception is lessened and lights from the shore can be difficult to distinguish from those on the water. To make nighttime boating safer, keep the following in mind.

NAVIGATION LIGHTS

Vessels are required to show navigation lights from sunset to sunrise and during periods of restricted visibility. Understanding these light displays will provide invaluable information to the boater, as these lights can help the boater determine the length of another vessel, its orientation in relation to your boat, and the general direction

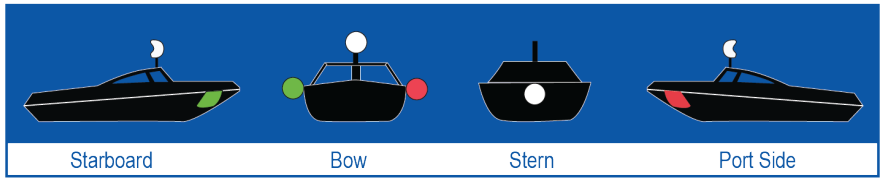
in which it is headed. All operators must ensure that their vessel's navigation lights are working and that the positioning and distance from which they can be seen meet federal regulations.

It is important to know which navigation lights you will see from another boat in certain situations. This can help you determine if you are in an overtaking, meeting, or crossing situation. The following chart illustrates the navigation lights you will see from various angles:

Whenever you see a red navigation light from another vessel, give way. It is the stand-on vessel. According to the Rules of the Road, it has the right of way. If you see both the red and green

GENERAL NAVIGATION

sidelights of another boat, it is coming straight toward you. You should take action to change course in order to avoid a collision.



Nonmotorized boats less than 23.9 feet
(canoes, kayaks, sailboats, etc.)

A white lantern or flashlight.

A light strong enough so that other boats around the horizon can see it at least two miles away.

Light displayed in sufficient time to avoid a collision with another watercraft.

The illustration shows a grey canoe with a blue seat and a blue paddle. Next to it is a blue flashlight with a white beam of light. To the right is a white lantern with a blue handle.

Nonmotorized boats less than 23.9 feet require:

- » A white light or flashlight.
- » A light strong enough so that other boats around the horizon can see it at least two miles away.
- » Light displayed in sufficient time to avoid a collision with another watercraft.
- » Canoes, sailboats, etc., operating under power must follow the lighting rules for motorboats.

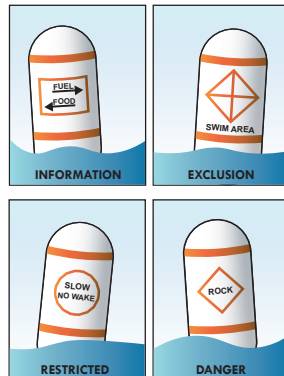
BUOYS AND WATERWAY MARKERS

Think of buoys and waterway markers as traffic signals on the water. They show navigable channels, mark unsafe areas, direct traffic, control speed and a host of other functions. As a boat or PWC operator, you need to know what these markers mean:

- » Red and green buoys/signs (also called lateral markers) are typically marking the edges of safe water areas; such as directing traffic within a channel.
- » Red objects or lights, and even numbers express the right side of the channel as a boater enters from open water or facing upstream.
- » Green objects or lights, and odd numbers express the left side of the channel as a boater enters

from open water or facing upstream.

- » All-green and all-red companion buoys indicate that the boating channel is between them. If green is on top, the channel is to the right as the boat is entering from open water or facing upstream. Red on top means the channel is to the left.



REGULATORY BUOYS

These types of orange and white buoys are used to notify boaters to various information, regulations and warnings.

Information	A white buoy with an orange square provides the boater with information.
Exclusion	A diamond shape with a cross means boats must keep out of the area.
Restricted Operations	An orange circle indicate areas with controlled or restricted operations.
Danger	Diamond shape alerts boaters to hazards, proceed with caution.

OBSTRUCTING NAVIGATION

- » To operate a watercraft so it obstructs ordinary navigation.
- » Block a pier, wharf, boat ramp, or access to a facility.
- » Anchor in the traveled portion of a waterbody, preventing passing boats.
- » To tamper, remove, or destroy a navigational aid.
- » To attach a watercraft to any buoy, except a mooring buoy, or any navigational aid placed by authorities.
- » Place buoys on public water with the exception of fishing marker buoys (which may be used by anglers as long as they are removed by sunset each day or buoys marking submerged hazards to navigation).
- » Not all water hazards are marked and boaters are expected to know the conditions of the waters that they are boating upon.



PERSONAL WATERCRAFTS

Requirements Specific To Personal Watercrafts

Operating a Personal Watercraft

Courtesy on the Water

PERSONAL WATERCRAFTS

REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIC TO PERSONAL WATERCRAFTS

Personal watercraft (PWC) are also known as jet skis, or wave runners. All PWC are considered motorboats and therefore, any regulations for other boats (such as fishing boats, cabin cruisers, etc.), also apply to PWC. PWC operators must obey all laws applying to other vessels as well as additional requirements that apply specifically to the operation of personal watercraft.

All people on board a PWC must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved flotation device. Inflatable PFD's are not approved for use on PWCs.

No one under the age of 14 may operate a PWC unless accompanied by a person 18 years or older. An exception to this law may be in case of emergency.

If equipped, a lanyard-type engine cutoff switch must be attached to the person, life jacket or clothing of the operator when underway. It is illegal to operate your PWC without properly attaching the lanyard to yourself.

If the PWC does not have navigation lights, it may not be operated in times of low visibility, between sunset and sunrise.

Personal watercraft must travel at slow no-wake speed (5 mph or less) within 150 feet of nonmotorized boats, shore, docks, swim rafts, swimmers, or any moored or anchored boat.

OPERATING A PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

PWC's must be operated in a safe manner. Prohibited maneuvers

include:

- » Weaving through congested waterway traffic.
- » Jumping the wake of another vessel while unreasonably close or when visibility around the other vessel is obstructed.
- » Waiting until the last possible minute to swerve and avoid collision with another oncoming vessel.
- » Chasing, harassing or disturbing wildlife.
- » Operating a PWC through emergent floating vegetation at greater than a "slow, no wake speed."

PWC are not equipped with brakes. Please use extreme caution when preparing to stop. Even if the engine has been turned off, your PWC will not instantly stop and will continue in your current course.

Most PWCs must have power in order to for the operator to continue control. If the engine on PWCs returns to idle or shuts off during operation, all steering control will be lost. This will disable your ability to steer and your PWC will continue as it was prior to shutting off the engine. Some newer PWC models are equipped with off-throttle steering.

Many PWCs support an emergency ignition switch. If your PWC does not have this feature, it is encouraged that one is installed. This ensures that the engine will shut off if the operator falls off of the PWC. The operator must properly secure the safety lanyard to themselves and their PWC.

PERSONAL WATERCRAFTS

COURTESY ON THE WATER

Driving close to a passing boat or PWC, jumping the wake, spraying another boat with your wake or “jet” spray, is not allowed in South Dakota. Approaching another boat too closely may block your ability to see oncoming traffic and may also hide you from other boats on the water.

Do your part to be a courteous PWC operator. Try to vary your operating area and maneuvers and when operating near residential or camping areas avoid maneuvers causing the engine exhaust to lift out

of the water. PWC owners should not modify exhaust systems to increase noise. Improperly modified exhaust systems may create illegal noise levels.



UNLESS YOU'RE...
**LOADING, LAUNCHING OR
ON THE WATER**

ALL PLUGS MUST BE OUT

SDLEASTWANTED.SD.GOV

DANGER!



CARBON MONOXIDE MAY BE PRESENT

**CO is odorless, colorless,
tasteless and deadly.**

- Always use a marine CO detector
- Know where and how CO may accumulate in and around your boat
- Stay off the back deck and the swim platforms while the engines are running
- Avoid idling and exposure to other boats' emissions
- Maintain fresh air circulation at all times
- Symptoms of CO poisoning mirror seasickness

For more information:
www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com/co-danger

WATER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Reckless/Careless Operation

Safety and Regulations

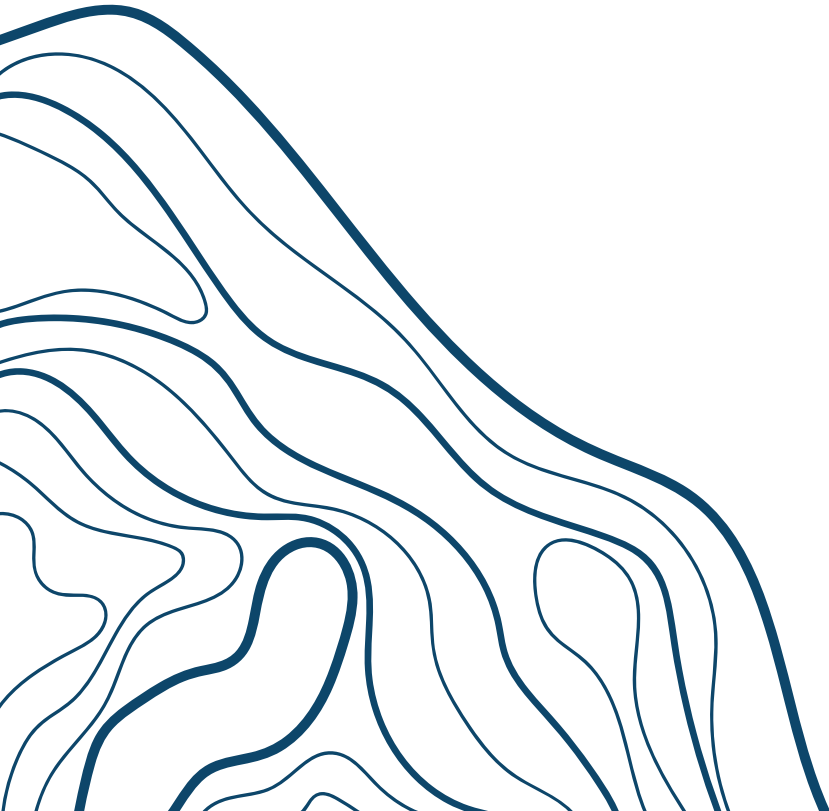
Boating While Impaired

Accidents on the Water

Towed Watersports

Tubing

Diver-Down Flags



WATER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

RECKLESS/CARELESS OPERATION

No person may operate or allow the operation of any boat in a reckless or careless manner. Reckless boat operation is any action done in a negligent manner that may endanger the life, limb, or property of any person.

Careless boat operation is defined as any action done without caution, at a speed or in a manner that may endanger a person or property, not amounting to reckless operation of a boat.

Examples of careless operation include:

- » Operating a watercraft so its wash or wake endangers, harasses, or interferes with any person or property.
- » Operating a watercraft so it obstructs ordinary navigation.
- » Operating a watercraft within an area legally marked off as a swimming area, or within 75 feet of a diver's warning flag.
- » Operating at unreasonable speed for the time, place and conditions.
- » Operating at unreasonable speeds or participating in towed watersports in harbors, near swimming beaches, docks, landings, piers, anchored boats, or fishing boats. Speed must not create a hazard or cause damage to others.
- » Allowing occupants on a boat to ride in a manner or location that endanger their safety.

SAFETY AND REGULATIONS

GFP conservation officers and all other law officers enforce the boating laws of South Dakota. U.S. Coast Guard also has enforcement

authority on federally controlled waters.

Whenever law enforcement officers contact you or give a signal to stop, you are required to stop and allow them to come alongside. Failing to stop or attempting to leave an area after being given a signal to stop could be considered eluding. Officers have the authority to stop and inspect boats in order to confirm compliance with operating laws. Always remember that a key job of these officers is to ensure your safety afloat.

Eluding a law enforcement officer: Any operator of a boat who, after failing or refusing to bring a boat to a stop after having been given a signal by hand, voice, emergency light, or siren, flees from a law enforcement officer or attempts to elude the pursuit of a law enforcement officer is guilty of eluding.

Boats must stop when: Only an authorized emergency rescue or law enforcement boat may display flashing blue or red lights or sound a siren. Upon giving either signal, the emergency and enforcement boat has the right-of-way and all other boats must immediately stop.

BOATING WHILE IMPAIRED

South Dakota law prohibits anyone from boating under the influence (BUI) of alcohol or drugs. Alcohol is the leading factor in all fatal boating accidents nationwide. If you boat under the influence your voyage will be terminated, the boat will be impounded and you will be arrested.

South Dakota law states that a

WATER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

person is considered to be boating under the influence (BUI) if:

- » There is 0.08 percent or more by weight of alcohol in that person's blood as shown by chemical analysis of that person's breath, blood, or other bodily substance;
- » Under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, marijuana, or any controlled drug or substance not obtained pursuant to a valid prescription, or any combination of an alcoholic beverage, marijuana, or such controlled drug or substance;
- » Under the influence of any controlled drug or substance obtained pursuant to a valid prescription, or any other substance, to a degree which renders the person incapable of safely driving or operating such boat;
- » Under the combined influence of an alcoholic beverage and any controlled drug or substance obtained pursuant to a valid prescription, or any other substance, to a degree which renders the person incapable of safely driving or operating such boat; or
- » Under the influence of any substance ingested, inhaled, or otherwise taken into the body as prohibited by law.

ACCIDENTS ON THE WATER

A vessel operator involved in a boating accident must report the accident if it results in:

Death or disappearance of any person or;

- » Injury to any person or;
- » Damage in excess of \$1,000

to any one person's property or total damage in excess of \$2,000 (for example, property damage may include damage from striking submerged objects such as stumps, rocks, etc).

Accidents must be reported immediately, to the nearest conservation officer or other law enforcement officer.

In the event the operator is incapable of reporting the accident, another occupant of the vessel involved in the accident must provide notification of the accident.

If an accident does occur, follow these steps:

- » Call 911.
- » Stop at the scene and assist others who are in trouble if you can do so safely.
- » Don't risk your life or the lives of others to save equipment.
- » If a second boat or other property is involved, exchange your name, address and boat number with the other operator or owner.

TOWED WATERSPORTS

It is unlawful to make a wake for a wake surfer or tow a person on water skis, wakeboard, tube, 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 observing the person wake-surfing or being towed.

Water-skiing, tubing, wake-surfing and similar acts are prohibited between one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour prior to sunrise of the following day.

WATER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

A wearable U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket must either be worn by the person being towed, or carried in the towing watercraft. Inflatable PFDs are not approved for use on PWC or for water-skiing, knee boarding, or similar towed use.

TUBING

The maneuvers of the tow boat affect tubes in a way that is similar to a clock's pendulum. Riders do not have the directional control that water skiers have, so the boat operator needs to take special precautions.

Accidents are most often caused by:

- » The tube hitting a wake and flipping, throwing the rider(s) into the water or against each other.
- » Tubes swinging out as a boat turns— hitting an object or throwing the occupant off.
- » Injuries caused by the tow line and when two tubes being towed by the same boat collide.

tubing Safety Tips:

- » Keep speeds low (most tube manufacturers recommend a maximum of 15-20 mph) to reduce the likelihood of an accident.

- » Make turns gradually and away from shore, other boats, swim rafts or docks, to reduce the chance of collision:
- » Tow only a single tube at a time.
- » It is highly recommended that anyone on a tube wear a life jacket.
- » Any person operating a vessel that is towing a tuber must have an observer in the towing craft, or a wide-angle mirror.
- » Keep tube at least 20 feet behind the boat to avoid carbon monoxide exposure.
- » Many manufacturers also recommend no one under 6 years old be towed on a tube and following the manufacturer's recommended passenger weight limits.

DIVER-DOWN FLAGS

Scuba divers, skin divers, snorkelers, or underwater spearfisherman must display a warning flag when diving in order to give warning to boaters of a diver in the area.

The flag must be clearly visible and securely attached to a float, a rubber tube, or a boat, and is displayed in a manner that does not restrict navigation.

BE COURTEOUS. BE SAFE.

- » Diver-down flags indicate a driver is within 75 feet.
- » Boats may not be operated using an internal combustion engine within 75 feet of a diver-down flag.
- » Boats under the power of an electric motor may legally be operated within 75 feet of a diver-down flag.
- » A diver-down flag must be anchored to a float, a rubber tube, a diver, or a boat to indicate a diver is near.





***ON THE ROAD OR THE WATER,
YOU'RE HEADED NOWHERE FAST***



**WHILE
IMPAIRED.**



**OPERATION
DRY WATER**



Produced with a grant from the Sport Fish Resources and Boating Trust Fund administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.



OPERATIONDRYWATER.ORG

INFLATABLE LIFE JACKET

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I do not know how to swim. Should I use an inflatable life jacket?

No. A poor or non-swimmer could panic in an unexpected fall into the water and may forget they need to activate the manual “jerk to inflate” cord. Please use an inherently buoyant or hybrid life jacket (has both inherent and inflatable system of buoyancy) that provides flotation without any action on your part.

Is there an age requirement for inflatable life jackets?

Yes. Inflatables are only approved for use by people age 16 years and older. People under the age of 16 must have an inherently buoyant or hybrid life jacket in their size range, and it should be properly worn.

Are inflatable life jackets approved for all boating activities?

No. Full inflatable life jackets are not approved for high-speed activities such as riding on a personal watercraft, waterskiing or tubing, participating in whitewater activities, or working in commercial boating activities (please wear an inherently buoyant life jacket).

Will any CO2 cylinder work from a store?

No. It is important to use a rearm kit that includes a cylinder that is supplied by the maker of the life jacket. The correct cylinder to use will be indicated on the life jacket itself and in the owner’s manual, and can be obtained by contacting the life jacket manufacturer.

Can I use my CO2 cylinder more than once?

No. Once the cylinder has been punctured, all of the gas will escape into the chamber. This is why you need to check to see if the cylinder is full before each outing. If your device has a Cylinder Seal Indicator, it will show GREEN if the cylinder is full. If it shows RED, you must replace the cylinder.

Can an inflatable life jacket be worn under clothes?

It’s important to know that inflatable life jackets can never be worn under clothing, including coats or jackets. If so, the life jacket would function ineffectively and could lead to serious injury, discomfort or difficulty breathing.

How do I maintain my inflatable life jacket?

Frequent inspections are important. Inspection would include orally inflating the life jacket and ensuring it holds air for 16-24 hours, inspecting the cylinder (not discharged and no corrosion), and checking that the cylinder is screwed in tight. Always refer to the owner’s manual.



PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Oil and Other Hazardous Substances

Disposing of Waste and Trash

Clean Boating

OIL AND OTHER HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

It is illegal to dump oil into the bilge of the vessel without means for proper disposal. Oil waste must be disposed of at an approved reception facility.

On recreational boats, a bucket will work for temporary storage prior to disposing of the oil waste.

A 5x8 inch placard must be displayed on boats that are 26 feet or longer when boating on federally controlled waters.

DISPOSING OF WASTE AND TRASH

South Dakota law requires every vessel with kitchen or toilet facilities to be able to manage liquid and solid waste without polluting the water.

Federal law requires vessel with a toilet to have an operable U.S. Coast Guard-certified marine sanitation device on board.

It is illegal to dump refuse, garbage, or plastics into state or federally controlled bodies of water.

If boating on federally controlled waters and your vessel is 26 feet or longer, you must display a Garbage Disposal Placard that is at least 4x9 inches and notifies passengers and crew about discharge restrictions.

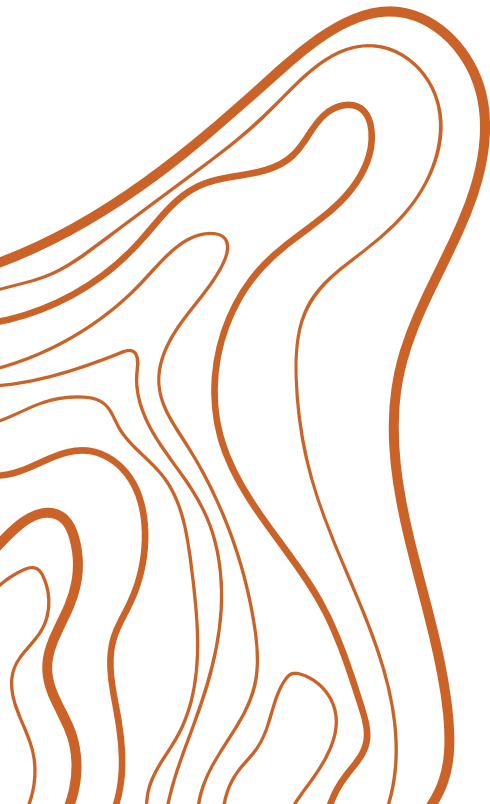
CLEAN BOATING

All recreational boats with installed toilet facilities must have an operational marine sanitation device (MSD) onboard. A MSD is a specific piece of machinery dedicated to treat, process, and/or store raw, untreated sewage that can accumulate onboard water vessels. There are three types of MSDs:

- » Type I is an on-board treatment device using chemicals to kill bacteria. After treatment the waste can be discharged.
- » Type II is also an on-board treatment device that uses a biological digestion based system. After treatment, the waste can be discharged.
- » Type III is a holding tank or similar device that prevents the overboard discharge of treated or untreated sewage. Remember to clean your tank before winterizing your boat.

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

**Aquatic Invasive Species
General AIS Regulations**



AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) can have negative effects to South Dakota waters, including: reducing game fish populations, impacting water quality and interfering with recreational boating.

REGULATIONS

External felt sole footwear (boots and waders) may not be used in South Dakota waters.

A person may not possess, transport, sell, purchase or propagate an AIS except for:

- » A person possessing a valid scientific collector's permit;
- » A person authorized by GFP to stock triploid grass carp for pond management purposes;
- » A person contracted by GFP to conduct commercial fishing operations;
- » A commercial plant harvester operating within the requirements of a department approved work plan or a lakeshore property owner operating within the requirements of a department approved permit;
- » A person in the process of removing an AIS from a boat, boat dock or lift or related equipment;
- » An owner or agent of the owner of a boat, boat dock or lift, or related equipment in the process of transporting the boat for decontamination using a department-approved process; or
- » An employee of a business approved by the department to transport and possess boats, boat docks and lifts

for the purpose of watercraft decontamination.

- » A lakeshore property owner in the process of transporting aquatic invasive species for disposal in a manner that minimizes possible introduction to new waters.
- » In the case of fish and crayfish species, only dead specimens may be transported or possessed.

WATERCRAFT RESTRICTIONS

All plants, mud, animals, or other organic material must be removed from boats and trailers except for:

- » An owner or agent of the owner of a boat with a shooting or observational blind constructed of aquatic macrophytes cut above the water line, attached to or in boat.

A person may not launch or attempt to launch a boat, motorboat, boat trailer, boat dock, or boat lift of any kind into the waters of the state with an aquatic invasive species attached or onboard except for:

- » An owner or agent of the owner of a conveyance with dreissenid mussels attached that is subsequently launched directly into the infested water from which it was removed, if the conveyance was stored on the riparian property of the owner or at a marina business property on the infested water, prior to launch.

Except for emergency response boats, all trailered boats shall have all drain plugs, bailers, valves or other devices used to control the drainage of water opened or

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

removed and kept out, except while in a boat ramp parking area, or while being launched or loaded.

WATERCRAFT INSPECTIONS

Any vehicle transporting a boat, other watercraft, or related equipment must stop at open AIS inspection stations.

Should an aquatic invasive species be found or suspected to be present as a result of an inspection, a department approved decontamination will be required prior to launching.

FISH AND BAIT TRANSPORTATION RESTRICTIONS

Except when in a boat ramp parking area or on the water, bait and fish cannot be transported in water from a lake, river, or stream.

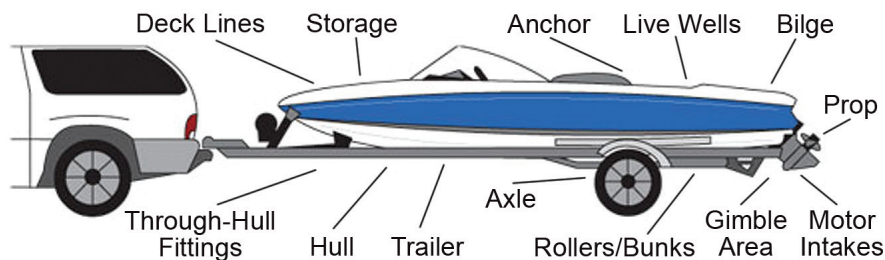
NOTE: Silver and bighead carp that jump into a boat or are netted from the air using a dip net may be kept. Only dead silver and bighead carp may be transported.

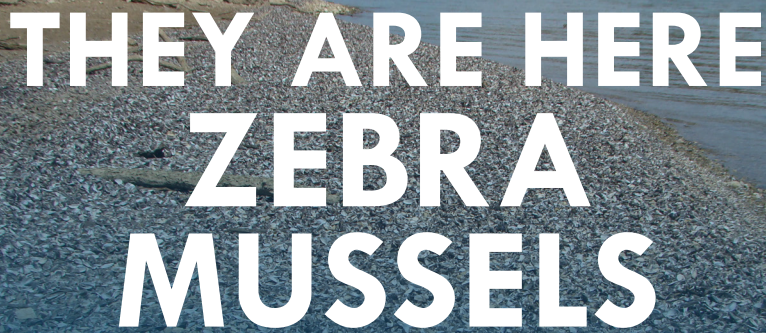
RESIDUAL WATER DECONTAMINATION

One way that zebra and quagga mussels spread is through the transport of water infested with their microscopic larvae (veligers). Many recreational boats, such as wakeboard boats, are equipped with one or more ballast tanks that hold water to create a larger wake for stunts and tricks. Due to their design, most of these tanks cannot be fully drained of water. If a ballast boat is used on a zebra mussel infested water, the tanks can hold veligers that could then spread to the next water visited. This decontamination must be completed before the boats next launch or meet the required dry time.

For a complete list of AIS regulations and the most current list of AIS infested waters, visit SDLEASTWANTED.SD.GOV.

Before launching and before leaving...
Inspect everything!





THEY ARE HERE ZEBRA MUSSELS

- » **COST BILLIONS ANNUALLY** across the U.S. on mitigation to protect drinking water, irrigation, and power production.
- » **DAMAGE MOTORS AND INCREASE MAINTENANCE COSTS** for boaters.
- » **ALTER FOOD WEB** by removing large amounts of food for prey fish, larval sport fish, and native planktivores like paddlefish.
- » **INCREASE TOXIC BLUE-GREEN ALGAE BLOOMS** by preferentially consuming green algae.
- » **FOUL THE TASTE AND SMELL OF DRINKING WATER.**
- » **PRODUCE UP TO 1 MILLION EGGS PER FEMALE EACH YEAR.**
Eradication is impossible.

CLEAN

BOATS AND TRAILERS OF ALL MUD AND PLANT DEBRIS.

DRAIN

LIVE WELLS, PUMPS, LOWER UNITS ON MOTORS,
AND BAIT BUCKETS.

DRY

BOATS, LIVE WELLS AND TRAILERS.



EVERY TIME YOU LEAVE THE WATER.

SDleastwanted.sd.gov

PUBLIC WATER ZONES



SCAN ME

The most up-to-date Public Water Zones can be found at: sdlegislature.gov/Rules/Administrative/16662



IMPORTANT LIFE JACKET REMINDERS

1. Double check that your life jacket is appropriate for your favorite water activities. Read the label!
2. Take the time to ensure your life jacket fits properly with no excess room above the openings and the life jacket does not ride up over your chin or face. A snug fit in these areas shows the life jacket fits properly.
3. Make sure the life jacket is properly zipped and/or buckled.
4. Check your life jacket is in good serviceable condition, with no tears or holes. Test to make sure it works properly.
5. Life jackets meant for adult-sized people do not work for children. If you are boating with children, make sure they are wearing properly fitted, child-sized life jackets based on their weight.
6. Do not buy a life jacket for your child to “grow into.”





CONTACT

GENERAL INFORMATION: 605.223.7660
TTY: 605.223.7684, email: wildinfo@state.sd.us

CONSERVATION OFFICERS: For a complete list of Conservation Officers, visit gfp.sd.gov/contactus

OR SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE!



100%

of accidents and fatalities from boating under the influence are preventable.



#safeboating



ALCOHOL USE

is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents



#safeboating

BOATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

=

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Boating and alcohol can be a deadly mix. A boater is likely to become impaired more quickly than an automobile driver, and even moderate drinking can cause significant impairment on the water. The environmental stressors of the marine environment – motion, vibration, engine noise, sun, wind, and spray – accelerate the impairing effects of alcohol. These stressors cause fatigue that makes a boater's coordination, judgment and reaction time decline even faster when consuming alcohol.

DANGERS OF BUI

- » The use of alcohol is involved in about a third of all recreational boating incidents.
- » A boat operator is likely to become impaired more quickly than a driver on land, drink for drink.
- » The environmental stressors of the boating environment make it especially dangerous for persons with high levels of intoxication.
- » Alcohol impairs coordination and judgment; two qualities essential for safe boating.
- » A recreational boat operator with a blood alcohol content (BAC) at or above 0.10% has a fatality rate 10x that of a sober operator.
- » At .035% BAC a boater's ability to operate a boat is impaired.
- » The penalties for BUI can include large fines, revocation of operator privileges and serious jail terms.

