the BOATER'S GUIDE OF ARIZONA

A HANDBOOK OF BOATING LAWS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

0801 Edition

Arizona Game and Fish Department
www.azgfd.gov

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Welcome to Arizona's beautiful waterways. We in Arizona are fortunate enough to have some of the most breathtaking, expansive lakes and rivers in the country for our recreational enjoyment.

The past few years have seen a steady increase in both the numbers and diverse types of watercraft on our state's waterways, making the responsibilities of boating enforcement and education increasingly important and complex.

We at the Arizona Game and Fish Department are committed to providing you with an enjoyable boating experience. We've produced this guide to provide all boaters and water enthusiasts with a positive experience while using one of Arizona's most valuable resources, our waterways. In addition to courtesy and defensive boating, this information is designed to aid you by highlighting Arizona's boating laws on our state's waterways. We also encourage you to take a complete course on boating safety, available from our certified instructors throughout the state. For information, call 623-236-7235 or visit our website: www.azgfd.gov.

Have a wonderful boating season and obey the laws. Remember, "it only takes one"—one time not wearing a PFD (life jacket), one drink could put you over the limit, or one second of reckless operation.

Mission Statement:
To conserve, enhance, and restore Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and habitats through aggressive protection and management programs, and to provide wildlife resources and safe watercraft and off-highway vehicle recreation for the enjoyment, appreciation, and use by present and future generations.

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the BOATER'S GUIDE

OF ARIZONA

A Handbook of Boating Laws and Responsibilities

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Published by Boat Ed, 2906 Ladybird Lane, Dallas, TX 75220, 214-351-0461.

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FORWARD

This guide is an overview of Arizona's boating laws. It is not a substitute for the vast amount of information provided in a formal Boating Education Class. Remember, taking a Boating Education Class can heighten your enjoyment of safe boating in Arizona and may save you money on boat insurance. These classes also may save a life—maybe yours or that of a family member. Classes are available through the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, or the U.S. Power Squadrons. For more information, visit our website—**www.azgfd.gov**—or call us at **623-236-7235**.

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Two Girls Kayaking compliments of U.S. Coast Guard

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New boating laws ...

- Call the Arizona Game and Fish Department at: **602-942-3000**
- Visit the Arizona Game and Fish Department website at: **www.azgfd.gov**

Information in this booklet does not replace what is specifically legal for boating in Arizona, which is found in the Arizona Revised Statutes, Arizona Game and Fish Commission Rules, and federal laws.

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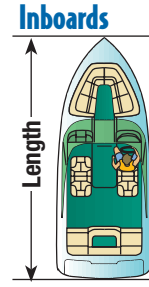
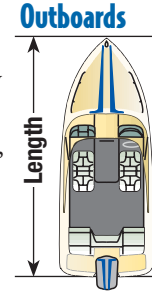
Before Going Out

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

Vessel Length Classes

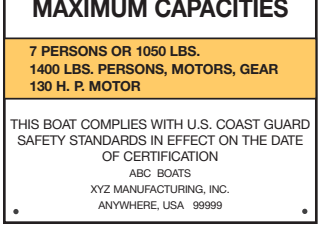
- A vessel's length class determines the equipment necessary to comply with federal and state laws.
- Vessels are divided into length classes:
  - Less than 16 feet
  - 16 feet to less than 26 feet
  - 26 feet to less than 40 feet
  - 40 feet to less than 65 feet
- Length is measured from the tip of 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.





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.



- 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.

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- On vessels with no capacity plate, a simple formula can provide a guide. Multiply length (in feet) by width (in feet) and divide the result by 15. This will give you the maximum number of people at an average weight of 150 lbs. that the boat will accommodate safely under calm water conditions. This information can be found on the U.S. Coast Guard's boating safety website: **www.uscgboating.org**.

$$\frac{L' \times W'}{15}$$

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

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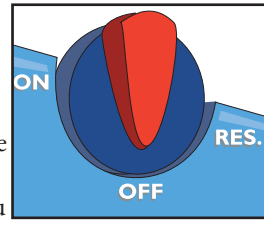
The most important safe fueling practice …
If your vessel is equipped with a power ventilation system, turn it on for at least four minutes after fueling and before starting your engine to remove gas vapors in the bilge.

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-lighted 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.

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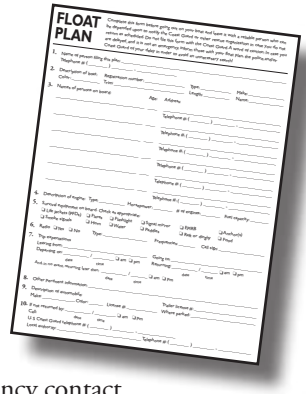
- Remove a trailer wheel if parked for an extended time.
- Purchase a quality trailer hitch lock and use it.

- 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.
- Remove the Certificate of Number (registration card) when the vessel is not being operated.

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.


FLOAT PLAN

Complete this form before getting on a power boat or sailboat. Keep it handy. Give it to a responsible person who has the department phone or call the Coast Guard. Be sure to report various changes in your plan. Do not file this form with the Coast Guard. Do not leave it on your car or anywhere else that may be broken into. Do not file this form with the Coast Guard. Keep it in your car, in your pocket, purse or wallet. Make a copy for your emergency contact. Leave the Float with your family or relatives. In case you are delayed, call or send an emergency contact with the Float with your family or relatives. In case you are delayed, call or send an emergency contact with the Float with your family or relatives. In case you are delayed, call or send an emergency contact with the Float with your family or relatives. Make sure

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 timeframe during which you will be boating. High winds create hazardous conditions for boaters.
- ✓ 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 life jackets (personal flotation devices or PFDs), and check that they are in good condition.
- ✓ Leave a float plan with a reliable friend or relative.

Trailering Your Vessel Safely

- **Before leaving home:**
  - Secure all gear in the vessel and arrange it so that the weight is evenly distributed in the vessel.
  - Properly secure the vessel with several tie-down straps and/or safety lines to prevent it from shifting.

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- Tilt and secure the engine to increase clearance.
- Crisscross the safety chains when attaching them to the towing vehicle.
- Make sure the trailer brakes and lights are working.

- **On the road:**
  - Think farther ahead on the road than usual: anticipate changes in traffic flow in advance; make wider turns at corners and curves; allow extra time and distance for stopping and for passing other vehicles; and remember the length added by your trailer.
  - Be aware that there may be lower speed limits for vehicles with trailers.
  - After 5 to 10 miles of travel at highway speed, stop for a walk-around inspection of the vehicle and trailer. Check tires, lights, coupler, etc.; and feel the trailer hubs. Excessively hot hubs may indicate a problem. On extended trips, make periodic stops to do a walk-around inspection.
- **Launching your vessel from a trailer:**
  - Prepare your vessel well away from the boat ramp.
  - Back the vessel into the water until the lower unit of the engine can be submerged while on the trailer.
  - Once the engine is warmed up, back the trailer further until the vessel floats. Then back slowly off the trailer.
- **Retrieving your vessel:**
  - Back the trailer into the water so that approximately two-thirds of the rollers or bunks are submerged.
  - Move the vessel onto the trailer far enough to attach the winch line to the bow eye of the vessel. Finish pulling it onto the trailer by cranking the winch.
  - Tow the vessel off the ramp out of the way of others.
  - While at the ramp area, remove all weeds from the vessel, remove the drain plug, and drain live wells.

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On the Water

Safe navigation on Arizona's waterways is everyone's responsibility. Every operator is responsible for knowing and following the relevant navigation rules. You are legally obligated to know the rules and to apply them to avoid collisions.

Encountering Other Vessels

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

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Navigation Rules

There are two terms that help explain these rules.

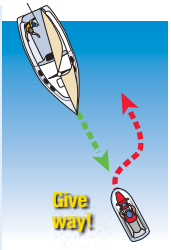
- **Stand-on vessel:** The vessel that should maintain its course and speed
- **Give-way vessel:** The vessel that must take early and substantial action to avoid collision by stopping, slowing down, or changing course

Power vs. Power

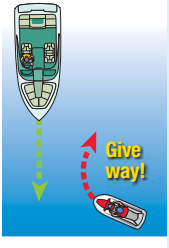
Meeting Head-On

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



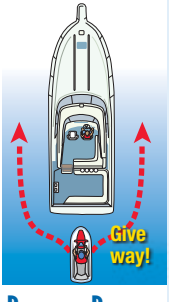
Power vs. Power

Crossing Situations

Power vs. Power: The vessel on the port (left) is the give-way vessel. The vessel on the starboard (right) is the stand-on vessel.

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

Power vs. Sail

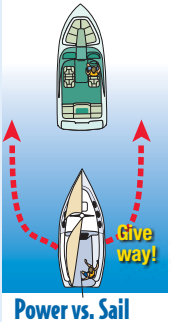


Power vs. Power

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.



Power vs. Sail

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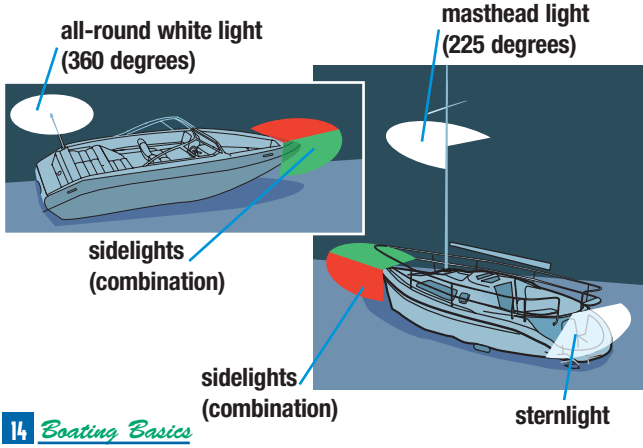
Nighttime Navigation

Be on the lookout for the lights of other vessels when boating at night. Several types of lights serve as navigational 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 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.



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Encountering Vessels at Night

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

Encountering a Sailboat at Night

When you see **only a green light or only a red light**, you are approaching a sailboat under sail and you must give way. When in a crossing situation with a powerboat, the sailboat under sail is always the stand-on vessel!

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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 vessel enters from the open sea or heads upstream.

Green colors, green lights, and odd numbers indicate the left side of the channel as a vessel 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 vessel enters from the open sea or heads upstream; if red is on top, the preferred channel is to the left.

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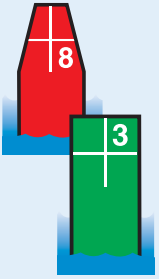
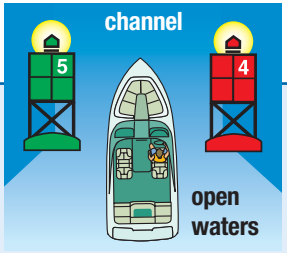
Nuns are red cone-shaped buoys marked with even numbers.

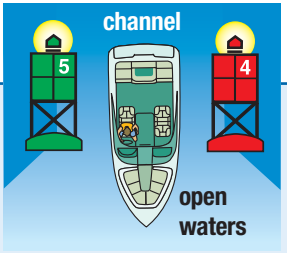
Cans are green cylindrical-shaped buoys marked with odd numbers.



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.

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Non-Lateral Markers

Non-lateral markers are navigational aids that give information and regulations. The most common are regulatory markers. They are white with orange stripes on the top and bottom with a geometric shape between the stripes. The shapes indicate the purpose of the markers as shown below.

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.

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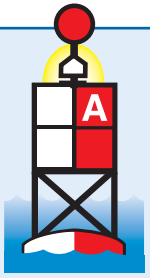
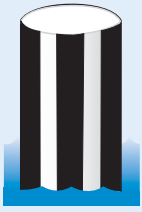
Other Non-Lateral Markers

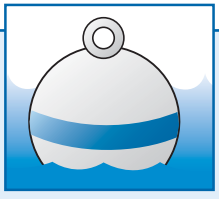


Safe Water Markers are white with red vertical stripes and mark mid-channels or fairways. They may be passed on either side.



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.

Note, the following actions are illegal.

- Willfully damaging, removing, interfering with, or tying up to a navigation buoy not intended for mooring
- Mooring, anchoring, or fastening to shore for more than 14 consecutive days any vessel on public waters unless:
  - The vessel is moved 25 nautical miles or more from its previous location ***or ...***
  - The vessel is in a special anchorage area, is authorized for private dock or moorage, or is authorized by the government agency or private interest with jurisdiction over the waters.

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Weather Emergencies

Weather can change very rapidly and create unexpected situations for boat operators. Weather-related accidents in Arizona are on the rise, and even meteorologists have trouble predicting rapid weather changes. You should always monitor weather developments. One way is to tune a VHF radio to the frequencies listed on the next page. Then seek a protected area before the weather becomes a threat.

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.

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- 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.

VHF Frequencies Broadcasting NOAA Weather Reports

162.400 MHz	**162.450 MHz**	**162.500 MHz**	**162.550 MHz**
162.425 MHz	**162.475 MHz**	**162.525 MHz**	

These are the most commonly used VHF channels on United States waters.

Channel 6 Intership safety communications.

Channel 9 Communications between vessels (commercial and recreational), and ship to coast (calling channel in designated USCG Districts).

Channel 13 Navigational use by commercial, military, and recreational vessels at bridges, locks, and harbors.

Channel 16 Distress and safety calls to U.S. Coast Guard and others, and to initiate calls to other vessels; often called the "hailing" channel. (Some regions use other channels as the hailing channel.) When hailing, contact the other vessel, quickly agree to another channel, and then switch to that channel to continue conversation.

Channel 22 Communications between the U.S. Coast Guard and the maritime public, both recreational and commercial. Severe weather warnings, hazards to navigation, and other safety warnings are broadcast on this channel.

Channels 24-28 Public telephone calls (to marine operator).

Channels 68, 69, and 71 Recreational vessel radio channels and ship to coast.

Channel 70 Digital selective calling "alert channel."

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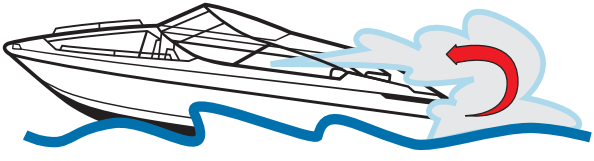
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that is very toxic even in small quantities. It is produced when a carbon-based fuel, such as gasoline or diesel, is burned. Cooking ranges, heaters, and charcoal grills produce carbon monoxide also.

Carbon Monoxide Kills!

- Carbon monoxide disperses freely through the air and will travel readily throughout a boat.
- Carbon monoxide discharged as engine, generator, or appliance exhaust may re-enter your boat through any opening.
- By keeping a steady flow of fresh air moving through your boat, you will eliminate much, if not all, of the hazard. The danger comes when there are pockets of stagnant air loaded with carbon monoxide that are not flushed from your boat.
- When operating any type of watercraft, be careful running downwind because exhaust gases may blow back on board.



- The best prevention for carbon monoxide poisoning is knowing that carbon monoxide exists.
- Everyone should know the symptoms and treatment of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- A marine-type carbon monoxide detector will sound an alarm when the gases reach an unacceptable level.

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Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

One or more of the following symptoms may signal the adverse effects of carbon monoxide accumulations:

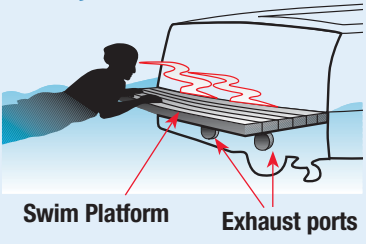
- Throbbing temples
- Inattentiveness or lack of concentration
- Inability to think coherently
- Ringing in the ears
- Tightness across the chest
- Headache, drowsiness, nausea, dizziness, fatigue, vomiting, collapse, and convulsions

For additional information, read ***Boaters Protect Yourself from this Silent Killer! Carbon Monoxide***, a brochure produced by the Arizona Game and Fish Department that is available by contacting your nearest Arizona Game and Fish Department office.

Treatment of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Evacuate, Ventilate, Investigate, and Seek Medical Help.

Teak surfing, platform dragging, and water-skiing within 20 feet of a moving watercraft can be fatal.



- **Stay away from the exhaust ports—carbon monoxide builds up in areas near exhaust vents.**
- **DO NOT swim in areas where carbon monoxide may accumulate, such as the cavity between the swim platform and the stern of the boat.**

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Other Boating Emergencies

A safe boater knows how to prevent and respond to other boating emergencies.

Falling Overboard

- **To prevent persons from falling overboard:**
  - Don't sit on the gunwale, bow, seat backs, motor cover, or any other area not designed for seating.
  - Don't sit on pedestal seats when underway at greater than idle speed.
  - Don't stand up in or lean out from the boat.
  - Don't move about the boat when underway.

- **If someone on your boat falls overboard:**
  - Reduce speed and toss the victim a throwable PFD.
  - Have other passengers watch the victim.
  - Turn your boat around and slowly pull alongside the victim, approaching the victim from downwind or into the current, whichever is stronger.
  - Turn off the engine. Pull the victim on board over the stern, keeping the weight in the boat balanced.

Capsizing or Swamping

- **To reduce the risk of capsizing or swamping:**
  - Don't overload your boat. Balance the load.
  - Slow your boat appropriately when turning.
  - Secure the anchor line to the bow, never to the stern.
  - Don't boat in rough water or in bad weather.
- **If you capsize or swamp your boat, or if you have fallen overboard** and can't get back in:
  - Stay with the boat.
  - Try to reboard or climb onto it in order to get as much of your body out of the cold water as possible.

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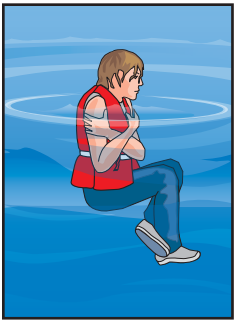
- **If the boat sinks or floats away,** don't panic.
  - If wearing a life jacket (PFD), remain calm and await help.
  - If you aren't wearing a PFD, look around for one or for other buoyant items to use as a flotation device.
  - In cold water, float rather than tread.

Hypothermia

- **If you are boating in cold water:**
  - Dress in several layers of clothing under your PFD or wear a wetsuit or drysuit.
  - Learn to recognize the symptoms of hypothermia. Symptoms begin with shivering and bluish lips and nails, and progress to a coma and, ultimately, death.
- **To reduce the effects of hypothermia:**
  - Put on a PFD if not wearing one. It helps you to float without excessive movement and insulates your body.
  - Get as much of your body out of the water as possible.
  - Don't take your clothes off unless necessary—clothes can help you float and provide insulation.
  - Don't 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.



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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 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 … You always must have power in order to maintain control. If you allow the engine to return to idle or shut off during operation, you lose all steering control. The PWC will continue in the direction it was headed before the engine was shut off, no matter which way the steering control is turned.

- **A PWC has no 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.

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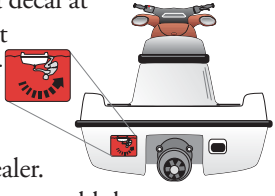
Ignition Safety Switches

- 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 Type III life jacket. 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 would be difficult. Also, avoid riding where there are strong currents or winds, which could hamper your reboarding efforts.

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PWC Courtesy

- 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. Excessive use in one area can be an irritant to people who are there to enjoy a quiet and relaxing time.
- 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.

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Other PWC Considerations

- Remember that everyone on board a PWC must wear a life jacket (PFD). A high-impact life-jacket is recommended.
- 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 54 for other requirements specific to PWCs.

Become a Certified Boater

Take a boater education class from the Arizona Game and Fish Department to:

✓ Improve your family's safety on the water.
✓ Increase your boating knowledge and enjoyment.
✓ Be qualified for vessel insurance discounts.

Visit www.azgfd.gov or call 623-236-7235 to find a class near you.

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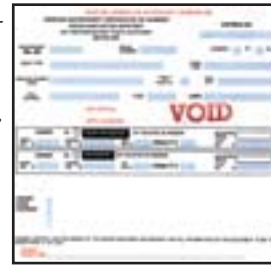
Before Going Out

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

Registering Your Vessel

- You must have an Arizona Certificate of Number (registration number) and registration decals to operate, moor, or anchor your vessel legally on the waterways of Arizona. The only exceptions are:
  - Non-motorized vessels
  - Vessels used solely as lifeboats
  - Vessels documented with the U.S. Coast Guard
  - Vessels with valid registration in another state or country that are on the waters of Arizona for 90 or fewer consecutive days
- *The Certificate of Number (registration card) must be on board and available for inspection by a law enforcement officer whenever the vessel is operated.*



- The registration number and registration decals must be displayed as follows.
  - Number must be painted, applied as a decal, or otherwise affixed to both sides of the bow.
  - Number must read from left to right on both sides of the bow.
  - Number must be in at least 3"-high **BLOCK** letters.
  - Number's color must contrast sharply with its background.
  - Letters must be separated from the numbers by a space or hyphen: **AZ 3717 ZW** or **AZ-3717-ZW**.

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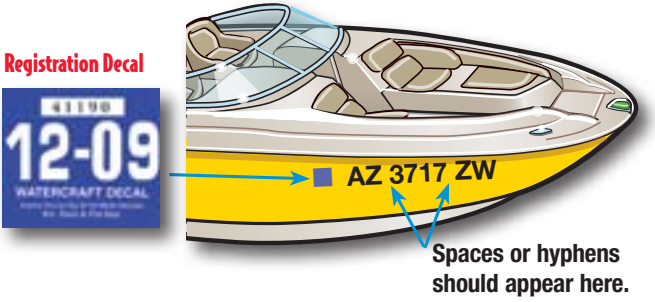

- No other numbers may be displayed on either side of the bow.
- Decals must be affixed to both sides of the vessel within three inches in front of the **AZ** of the registration number.

◆ If your vessel requires registration, it is illegal to operate it or allow others to operate your vessel unless it is registered and numbered as described above.

Where To Register

Applications for new boats, transfers of ownership, and duplicate registrations can be processed through the mail or at any Arizona Game and Fish Department office (see list on page 62). Please call **602-942-3000** if sending your application through the mail to ensure that the proper evidence and fees are submitted.

How To Renew

- In person at any Arizona Game and Fish Dept. office
- By mail
- Online at **www.azgfd.gov/watercraft**
- By calling toll-free at **1-866-462-0433**

For the latest information on vessel fees and registration questions, contact any Arizona Game and Fish Department office or call **602-942-3000**.

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Other Facts About Vessel Registration

- Arizona is a non-title state.
- Vessel registration is staggered, similar to motor vehicle registration. The color and date on the registration decals indicate when the registration expires.
- The application for transfer of ownership must be made within 15 days of purchase.
- If you change your address, you must notify the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) within 15 days either in writing or online at: **www.azgfd.gov/watercraft**.
- If you purchase a numbered vessel or if your watercraft is sold, stolen, lost, destroyed, or abandoned, you must report it to the AZGFD within 15 days.
- If you lose or destroy your Certificate of Number or decal, you must apply to the AZGFD for a duplicate.
- Vessels registered in another state or country may operate on Arizona waters for 90 consecutive days before Arizona registration and numbering are required.
- 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.

Vessel Registration Fees

An annual registration fee is required for each motorized vessel, including those with electric motors. The fees are as follows.

Resident		Non-Resident	
0 to 12 ft.	$20.00	0 to 12 ft.	$100.00
12 ft. 1 in. to 16 ft.	$22.00	12 ft. 1 in. to 16 ft.	$110.00
16 ft. 1 in. to 20 ft.	$30.00	16 ft. 1 in. to 20 ft.	$222.00
20 ft. 1 in. to 26 ft.	$35.00	20 ft. 1 in. to 26 ft.	$259.00
26 ft. 1 in. to 39 ft.	$39.00	26 ft. 1 in. to 39 ft.	$292.00
39 ft. 1 in. to 64 ft.	$44.00	39 ft. 1 in. to 64 ft.	$330.00
64 ft. 1 in. and over	$66.00	64 ft. 1 in. and over	$495.00

Duplicate Certificate of Number	$2.00
Late Registration Penalty	$5.00

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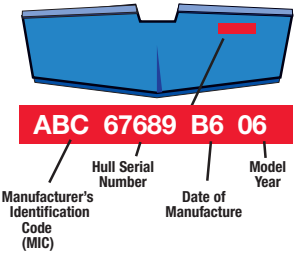
Hull Identification Number



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. They are engraved in the fiberglass or on a metal plate attached to the transom. 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.
- Owners of vessels that do not have a HIN must contact the AZGFD prior to registration.
- It is illegal to remove or alter the HIN.

Proof of Ownership Required To Register To register a vessel, you must provide as evidence of ownership a complete bill of sale, a signed Arizona Certificate of Number, a court decree, or an original Certificate of Origin. If the vessel was registered in another state, you must provide the original title or registration (if a non-title state).

- If a bill of sale is presented, it must include:
  - Buyer's name and seller's name and signature
  - Manufacturer's name
  - HIN (vessels manufactured after 1972)
  - Previous registration number (if applicable)
  - Purchase price
  - Sales tax paid if purchased from a dealer or at an auction. A business purchasing a vessel for rental or resale must complete a tax exemption form. Call the AZGFD (602-942-3000) for questions regarding sales or use tax.
- If previously registered in Arizona, the Certificate of Number must be signed by the previous owner and the new owner must complete the application on back.
- If registered in another state, the original title or registration must be submitted with the back side completed.

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Who May Operate a Vessel

Arizona law states that it is illegal for a person under the age of 12 to operate a vessel with a motor greater than 8 horsepower (which includes personal watercraft) unless:

- An emergency exists ***or …***
- Another person at least 18 years of age is on board.

Arizona's Top 10 Boating Violations

1. Not enough life jackets (personal flotation devices) for everyone on board the vessel.
2. Fire extinguisher—lack of, non-marine type, and/or out of service.
3. Riding on the bow, transom, or gunwales of a vessel operating above a wakeless speed.
4. Operating under the influence (OUI).
5. Excessive wake or speed.
6. No Type IV throwable PFD on board.
7. Child 12 years of age or younger not wearing a life jacket (PFD) while underway.
8. Reckless operation of a personal watercraft (PWC).
9. Lights—specifically no or incorrect navigation lights.
10. Water-skiing without an observer.

Marine Events

- To hold a marine event on federally controlled waters, you must obtain a permit from the U.S. Coast Guard.
- When the marine event is held on state waters, a permit is not required, but the event sponsor is responsible for ensuring the public's welfare.
- Events held on the Colorado River require a permit from the U.S. Coast Guard–San Diego.

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- Vessel operators competing in marine events may test the vessels prior to the event only if the operators have first obtained a permit from the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Enforcement

The boating laws of Arizona are enforced by Arizona Game and Fish Department officers, county deputy sheriffs, municipal officers, park rangers, and any other state-commissioned law enforcement officers. The officers have the authority to stop and board vessels to check for compliance with state laws. The U.S. Coast Guard has federal enforcement authority on all federally controlled waters.

- When hailed by an officer, the operator of a vessel must immediately stop and maneuver in such a way as to permit the officer to come alongside.
- Failure to obey an order or to comply with an officer will result in an enforcement action up to and including arrest.

- Officers may issue citations and may order an operator of a vessel back to shore to correct a violation. Some Arizona waterways—like the Colorado River—are shared with other states. On these shared waterways, laws from these other states apply—as well as federal regulations. To ensure that you are obeying all applicable laws, make sure you are knowledgeable about all the laws and regulations for the specific waterway you are using.
- Officers also may establish checkpoints on the waterways to ensure public safety.

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Required Equipment

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

Personal Flotation Devices (Life Jackets)

- All vessels, except sailboards and certain racing shells or rowing skulls, must have at least one wearable Type I, II, III, or V personal flotation device (PFD) that is U.S. Coast Guard–approved and of the proper size for each person on board. Sizing for life jackets (PFDs) is based on body weight and chest size.
- All life jackets (PFDs) must be in good and serviceable condition and must be readily accessible.
- In addition to the above requirements, vessels 16 feet in length or longer, except a canoe or kayak, must have one Type IV U.S. Coast Guard–approved life jacket (PFD) on board and readily accessible.
- All children 12 years of age and younger ***must wear*** a U.S. Coast Guard–approved Type I, II, or III life jacket (PFD) while underway on any vessel. The life jacket (PFD) must be fastened according to the manufacturer's recommended use and must fit the child properly.
- Each person on a PWC ***must wear*** a U.S. Coast Guard–approved Type I, II, or III personal flotation device; and all closures of the personal flotation device must be fastened or secured according to the manufacturer's design or recommended use and must be adjusted for a snug fit.
- Each person being towed behind a vessel on water skis or a similar device ***must wear*** a life jacket (PFD) or buoyant belt. Note, however, that buoyant belts are not approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

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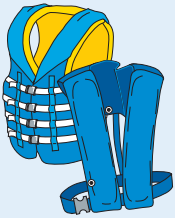
TYPE I: Offshore Life Jackets

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 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.*

Inflatable PFDs must have a full cylinder, green status indicators, and an accessible and intact lanyard or lever. Non-hybrid inflatable PFDs (no foam) are authorized only for persons at least 16 years old.

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Navigation Lights

The required navigation lights must be displayed between sunset and sunrise and during periods of restricted visibility such as fog or heavy rain. For requirements for larger vessels, see the U.S. Coast Guard's ***Navigation Rules***.

Power-Driven Vessels When Underway

If less than 65.6 feet (20 meters) 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 (12 meters) long, at least one mile—on a dark, clear night.
- An all-round white light 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 (one meter) 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 (20 meters) 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 (12 meters) long, at least one mile away.
  - A sternlight visible from at least two miles away.
- **If less than 23.0 feet (7 meters) long**, these vessels should:
  - If practical, exhibit the same lights as required for unpowered vessels less than 65.6 feet (20 meters) 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.

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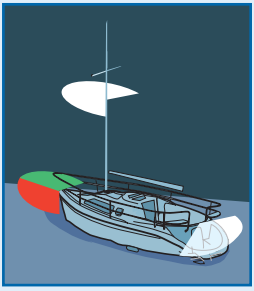
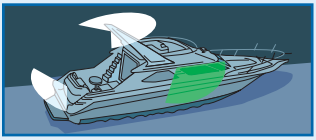
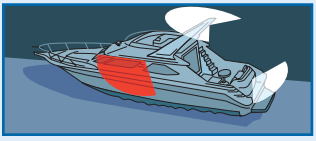
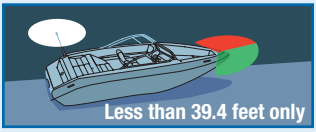
1. Power-Driven Vessels Less Than 65.6 Feet (20 meters)







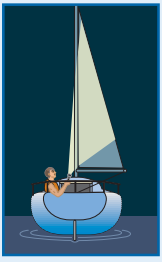
The masthead light and sternlight may be combined as an all-round white light on vessels less than 39.4 feet long.



2. Unpowered Vessels Less Than 65.6 Feet (20 meters)

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 (7 meters)



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.

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Fire Extinguishers

- All vessels are required to have at least one Type B-I fire extinguisher(s) on board if one or more of the following conditions exist:
  - Inboard engine
  - Closed compartments where portable fuel tanks may be stored
  - Double bottoms not sealed to the hull or which are not filled completely with flotation material
  - Closed living spaces
  - Closed storage compartments in which flammable or combustible materials may be stored
  - Permanently installed fuel tanks (any tank where the removal of the tank is hampered by the installation of tie-down straps or clamps)
- Approved types of fire extinguishers are identified by the following marking on the label—"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, but where they can be reached immediately. Be sure you know how to operate them, and inspect extinguishers regularly to ensure they are in working condition and fully charged.

Use this chart to determine the size and quantity required for your vessel.

Fire Extinguisher Requirements

Classification type & size	Foam minimum gallons	Carbon Dioxide minimum pounds	Dry Chemical minimum pounds
B-I	1¼	4	2
B-II	2½	15	10

Length of Vessel	Without Fixed System	With Fixed System*
Less than 26 ft.	one B-I	one B-I
26 ft. to less than 40 ft.	two B-I ***or*** one B-II	one B-I
40 ft. to less than 65 ft.	three B-I ***or*** one B-II and one B-I	two B-I ***or*** one B-II

** refers to a permanently installed fire extinguisher system*

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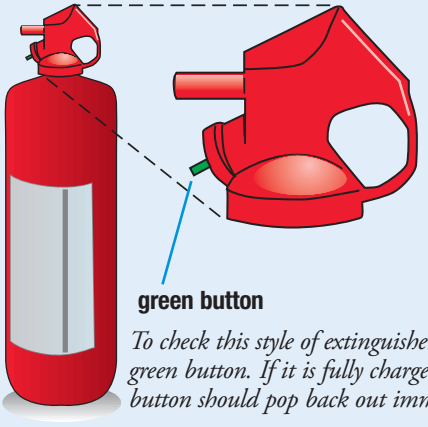
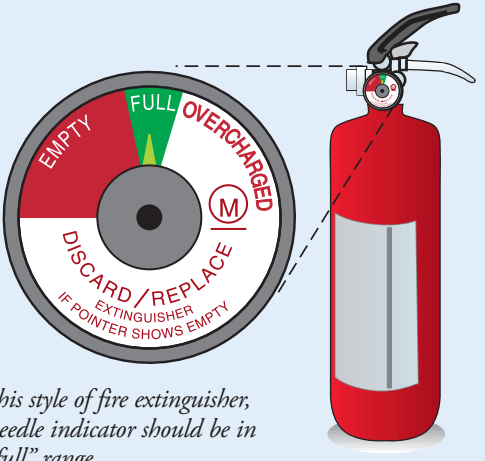
Fire Extinguisher Charge Indicators

Check the charge level of your fire extinguishers regularly. Replace them immediately if they are not fully charged.



To check this style of extinguisher, depress the green button. If it is fully charged, the green button should pop back out immediately.



On this style of fire extinguisher, the needle indicator should be in the "full" range.

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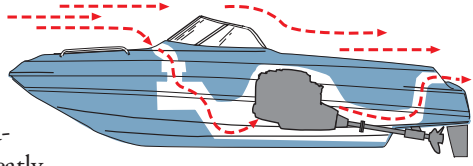
Ventilation Systems

The purpose of ventilation systems is to avoid explosions by removing flammable gases. Properly installed ventilation systems greatly reduce 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 your 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.
- Regularly check the ventilation ducts for obstructions, such as birds' nests. Make sure you can feel air coming out of the cowl when the ventilation system is turned on.

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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 an approved backfire flame arrestor on each carburetor.
- Backfire flame arrestors must be:
  - In good and serviceable condition ***and ...***
  - U.S. Coast Guard–approved (must comply with SAE J-1928 or UL 1111 standards).
- Periodically clean the flame arrestor and check for damage. The elements must be clean, and the grids must be tight enough to prevent flames from passing through.
- Automotive-type air cleaners are not adequate for marine use and are not permitted.

Mufflers and Noise Level Limits

Vessel operators may not hear sound signals or voices if the engine is not adequately muffled.

- All vessel engines must be equipped with an efficient muffler, underwater exhaust, or other effective muffling device that prevents excessive or unusual noise.
- A vessel operating on Arizona's public waters must not exceed any of the following noise levels.
  - A noise level of 86 dB(A) when the sound level is measured at 50 feet or more from the vessel
  - For an engine manufactured before January 1, 1993, a noise level of 90 dB(A) when the stationary sound level test (SAEJ2005) is performed
  - For an engine manufactured on or after January 1, 1993, a noise level of 88 dB(A) when the stationary sound level test (SAEJ2005) is performed
  - A noise level of 75 dB(A) when the shoreline sound level test (SAEJ1970) is performed

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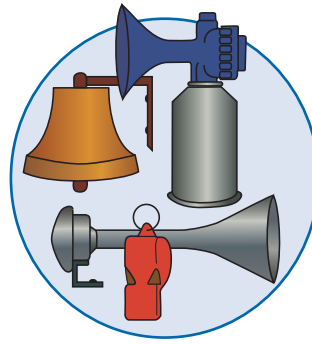
Sound-Producing Devices



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.

- Arizona state law does not require that vessels carry a sound-producing device; however, it is always a good idea to have one on board.
- Five (5) or more short blasts mean danger or doubt, which is very important for all boaters to remember.
- Federal law requires that vessels operating on federally controlled waters, such as the Colorado River and Lake Systems, be equipped with sound-producing device(s). On federally controlled waters:
  - Vessels less than 65.6 ft. (20 meters) 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 ft. (20 meters) or more in length are required to carry on board a whistle or horn, *and* a bell that are audible for at least one-half mile.

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Sound Signals

Some common sound signals that you should be familiar with as a recreational boater are as follows.

Changing Direction

- ***One short blast*** tells other boaters "I intend to pass you on my port (left) side."
- ***Two short blasts*** tell other boaters "I intend to pass you on my starboard (right) side."
- ***Three short blasts*** tell other boaters "I am backing up."

Restricted Visibility

- ***One prolonged blast*** at intervals of not more than two minutes is the signal used by power-driven vessels when underway.
- ***One prolonged blast plus two short blasts*** at intervals of not more than two minutes is the signal used by sailboats under sail.

Warning

- ***One prolonged blast*** is a warning signal (for example, used when coming around a blind bend or exiting a slip).
- ***Five (or more) short, rapid blasts*** signal danger or signal that you do not understand or that you disagree with the other boater's intentions.

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Visual Distress Signals (VDSs)

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

- 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 that are less than 16 feet in length
  - Non-motorized open sailboats that are less than 26 feet in length
  - Manually propelled vessels
- If pyrotechnic VDSs are used, a minimum of three must be carried in the vessel. Also, pyrotechnic VDSs must be dated and may not be carried past their expiration date.
- 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)
- 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 a vessel.

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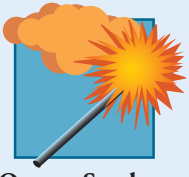
VDSs are classified as day signals (visible in bright sunlight), night signals (visible at night), or both day and night signals. VDSs are either pyrotechnic (smoke and flames) or non-pyrotechnic (non-combustible).

Pyrotechnic Visual Distress Signals

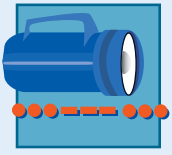


Orange Smoke
Day Signal

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

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.

Federally Controlled Waters

Vessels must observe federal requirements on these waters:

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

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On the Water

In addition to the laws mentioned previously, there are other Arizona regulations that apply on Arizona waterways.

Unlawful and Dangerous Operation

Arizona law designates these dangerous operating practices as illegal.

- **Negligent or Reckless Operation** of a vessel is operating in a manner that causes danger to others or their property, such as:
  - Operating in a restricted area, such as a marked swimming area
  - Operating while passenger(s) are positioned in the bow such that the operator's view is obstructed
  - Weaving through congested waterway traffic
  - Chasing, harassing, or disturbing wildlife
  - Teak surfing or platform dragging

> **No Wake or Wakeless** speed means a speed that does not create a wake and is never in excess of five miles per hour.

- **Speed Restrictions** require the operator to maintain a proper speed while operating a vessel. Specifically, it is illegal to:
  - Operate a vessel at speeds greater than are reasonable or proper given the existing waterway traffic, persons in the water, and weather conditions.
  - Exceed any posted speed limits.
  - Operate a vessel at greater than wakeless speed in a posted no wake zone.

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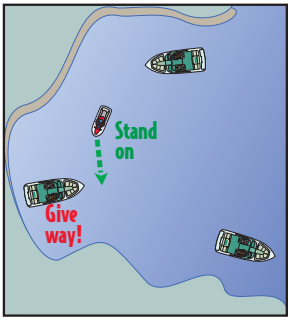
- Operate a vessel at speeds that may cause injury or damage to any other person, another vessel, or the property of others. This includes causing damage or danger from the wake of your vessel.

- **Riding on the Bow or Gunwales** is allowing passengers to ride where there may be a chance of falling overboard while underway at greater than "no wake speed" on a powerboat. Specifically, this means allowing passengers to ride on the covered bow, transom, swim step, or gunwales unless these are designed for carrying passengers at all speeds.
- **Overloading** is loading the vessel beyond its safe carrying capacity or the recommended capacity shown on the capacity plate. Take into consideration the weather and other operating conditions when determining if the vessel is overloaded.
- **Failure To Follow Navigational Rules** is operating a vessel in violation of the navigational rules of Arizona waters.
  - Specifically, operators of vessels:
    - Must follow the navigational rules shown on pages 12-13.
    - ***Must follow a counter-clockwise traffic flow.***
    - Leaving shore must give way to approaching vessels.
  - An exception to these rules is waterways where power-driven vessels are prohibited.



Remember—it is your responsibility to know the law.

On waterways shared with other states, such as the Colorado River, other states' laws and federal regulations apply. Always know all applicable boating laws and regulations.

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Alcohol and Drugs

Arizona law prohibits anyone from operating a power-driven vessel while under the influence of alcohol or any drug that causes the person to be even slightly impaired. Alcohol and drugs cause impaired balance, blurred vision, poor coordination, impaired judgment, and slower reaction time. Alcohol contributes to about one-third of all fatal boating accidents nationwide.

- A person is considered to be operating under the influence (OUI) of alcohol if he or she has an alcohol concentration of 0.08% or greater as determined by a test of his or her breath, blood, or urine. "Extreme OUI" is blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.15% and higher.
- If convicted of OUI or "Extreme OUI," a person can be fined up to $2,500 and jailed for up to six months. Subsequent convictions and "Aggravated OUI" may carry even more severe penalties.
- By operating a vessel on Arizona waters, you have consented to be tested for alcohol or drugs if arrested by a law enforcement officer for alleged violations under Arizona Watercraft Statutes.

Obstructing Navigation

It is illegal to:

- Anchor a vessel in a channel or launch area in a way that causes the anchored vessel to interfere with the safe passage of any other vessel.
- Moor or attach a vessel to a buoy (except a mooring buoy), beacon, light, or any other navigational aid placed on public waters by proper authorities.

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- Move, displace, tamper with, damage, or destroy any navigational aid.
- Place buoys, markers, or navigational aids in the water without proper authorization.
- Obstruct a pier, boat ramp, or access to any facility.
- Interfere unreasonably or unnecessarily with other vessels' use of the waterways or areas used for launching into these waterways.
- Moor, anchor, or fasten to shore for more than 14 consecutive days any vessel on public waters (see pg. 19).

Accidents and Casualties

- An operator involved in a boating accident must:
  - Stop his or her vessel *immediately* at the scene of the accident ***and …***
  - Give assistance to anyone injured or minimize any danger caused by the accident unless doing so would seriously endanger his or her vessel or passengers ***and …***
  - Give his or her name, address, and the identifying number of his or her vessel to anyone injured in the accident and to the owner of any damaged property.
- Vessel operators involved in an accident must send a boating accident report directly to: Arizona Game and Fish Department, Attn: Boating Law Administrator, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix, AZ 85086.
  - The operator must report the accident in writing to the Arizona Game and Fish Department within 48 hours if a person is injured or dies.
  - The operator must report the accident in writing to the Arizona Game and Fish Department within five days if damage to the vessel and/or other property exceeds $500.
- Boating accident report forms are available from law enforcement personnel at the lakes, first-aid stations, marinas, or ranger stations, or from the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

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Diver-Down Flags

- Scuba divers and snorkelers must display a diver-down flag to mark their diving area. The flag must be displayed whenever someone is diving below the surface.
- Vessels should stay as far away from a diver-down flag as is reasonable and prudent for the circumstances. The suggested safe distance from a flag is 100 yards.

Divers Flag

A rectangular red flag with a white diagonal stripe is used on inland waters, including the Colorado River and Lake Systems.

Alfa Flag

A blue and white International Code Flag A (or Alfa flag) is used on international waters.

Discharge of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances

It is illegal to discharge oil or hazardous substances.

- You must dispose of oil waste in an approved oil waste container.
- Use bilge absorbents (bilge pillows) in the bilge area to absorb any oil or fuel, preventing it from being pumped back into the water. Secure the bilge pillow to avoid interference with the bilge pump and blower system.

If your vessel discharges oil or hazardous substances into the water:

- Call the U.S. Coast Guard at **1-800-424-8802**.
- Also report the discharge to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality at **1-800-234-5677**.

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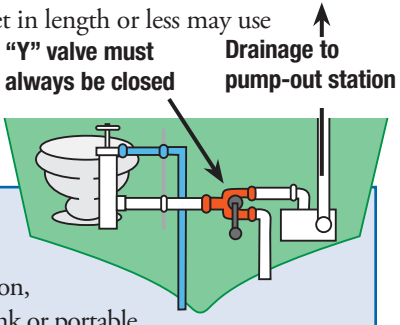
- If boating on federally controlled waters and your vessel is 26 feet or longer, you must display a 5 x 8-inch placard near the bilge pump switch that states the Federal Water Pollution Control Act's law.

Discharge of Waste

- State law prohibits humans and vessels from discharging any sewage into the waters or onto the shorelines of Arizona. Use portable toilets provided on the shore or the floating portable toilets. Consult a lake map for the locations of portable toilets.
- If you have a vessel with installed toilet facilities, it must have an operable marine sanitation device (MSD) on board. All installed devices must be U.S. Coast Guard–certified. Vessels 65 feet in length or less may use a Type I, II, or III MSD. Vessels over 65 feet must install a Type II or III MSD.



Types of MSDs

A Type III MSD is the simplest and most common, consisting of a holding tank or portable toilet. Waste is to be discharged into a pump-out facility.

Discharge of Trash

It is illegal to dump garbage, plastics, debris, or filthy or smelly objects or substances into any Arizona waters or shorelines. Many forms of litter can kill birds, fish, and marine mammals.

- You must store trash in a container while on board and place it in a proper receptacle after returning to shore.
- 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 4 x 9 inches and notifies passengers and crew about discharge restrictions.

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Specifically for PWC Operators

PWC operators must obey additional legal requirements that apply specifically to the operation of personal watercraft on Arizona waters. The definition of a "personal watercraft" is a watercraft that is less than 16 feet long; is propelled by machinery powering a water jet pump; and is designed to be operated by a person who sits, stands, or kneels on, rather than sitting or standing inside, the watercraft.

Requirements Specific to PWCs

- Each person on board a PWC ***must wear*** a U.S. Coast Guard–approved Type I, II, or III life jacket (personal flotation device). They must be worn according to the manufacturer's design and recommended use. All closures must be fastened and adjusted for a snug fit.
- 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 unless the PWC is equipped with the proper navigation lights.
- PWCs must be operated in a careful and responsible manner. It is considered reckless operation if a PWC operator commits *two or more* of the following acts simultaneously:
  - Operating within 60 feet of another vessel above a wakeless speed.
  - Operating within the vicinity of a vessel in a manner that obstructs the visibility of either operator.
  - Heading into the wake of a vessel that is within 60 feet and causing half or more of the length of the personal watercraft to leave the water.

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- Operating within 60 feet of another vessel, maneuvering quickly, turning sharply, or swerving unless the maneuver is necessary to avoid a collision.

- A PWC may not be loaded with passengers and gear beyond the safe carrying capacity recommended by the PWC manufacturer.

Sharing Your PWC ... Safely!

Sharing the fun of your personal watercraft (PWC) with friends is all part of the boating experience. Before you share your PWC, however, make sure that others you allow to operate it understand their responsibilities as an operator. They need to know that they have the same responsibilities as any other vessel operator, including obeying the navigation rules.

In addition:

- Make sure that anyone you allow to operate your PWC meets the minimum age (12 years of age and older) and education requirements for PWC operation in Arizona and the local waterway you are using.
- Show new operators how to start and reboard the PWC while on shore or in shallow water.
- Explain how to steer and control the PWC. Tell all new operators and remind experienced operators that ***power is required for steering control!***
- Make sure that the operator understands how to use the ignition safety switch and attaches the lanyard to his or her person or PFD before starting the engine.
- Have anyone new to PWCs go out in an uncongested area first. Tell them to stay clear of other PWCs, boats, or persons in the water.
- Explain how to recognize a "slow, no wake" speed marker and what to do when approaching one.

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Specifically for Skiing

Vessel operators towing a person(s) on water skis or a similar device have additional laws.

Towing Skiers

- A vessel towing a person(s) on water skis or any other similar device must have at least two persons on board—one to operate the vessel and a second person to observe the towed person(s). The observer must be at least 12 years old and be physically capable and mentally competent to act as an observer of a water-skier.
- Each person being towed behind a vessel on water skis or a similar device ***must wear*** a life jacket (PFD) or buoyant belt. Note, however, that buoyant belts are not approved by the U.S. Coast Guard. The AZGFD recommends the use of a U.S. Coast Guard–approved, brightly colored, Type III life jacket (PFD). The brightly colored life jacket (PFD) aids in making a skier more visible to other vessels.
- Water-skiing is restricted to daylight hours only. It is illegal to tow a person(s) on water skis, surfboard, or other similar device from sunset to sunrise.
- Both the operator of the towing vessel and the skier must operate in a safe manner. A reasonable distance from other vessels, people, and property must be maintained so as not to cause danger to the life or property of others.
- State law makes the person being towed (the skier) responsible if he or she behaves in a careless, reckless, or negligent manner.

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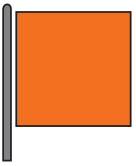
- Vessels towing person(s) on water skis or a similar device must carry and use a bright red or orange skier-down flag that is at least 12 x 12 inches in size and mounted on a handle. The observer must continuously observe the skier(s) and display a skier-down flag whenever a skier is in the water after falling or while preparing to ski.



- If towing a skier with a PWC, the same water-skiing laws apply. **Do not exceed the carrying capacity of the personal watercraft.**

Hand Signals for Skiers

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

Skier OK

Back to dock

Skier down—watch!

Speed up

Slow down

Speed OK

Turn left

Turn right

Stop

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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, read the article "Propeller Injury Intervention" on the U.S. Coast Guard's boating safety website: **www.uscgboating.org**.

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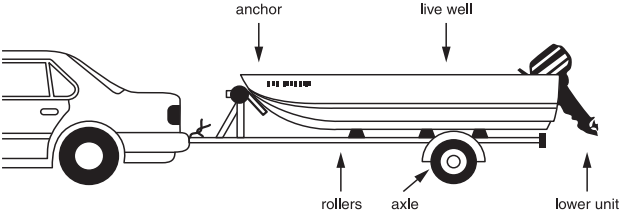
Control Aquatic Pests

ATTENTION BOATERS
Don't Pick Up Hitchhikers!

You can PREVENT destruction of fish habitat and loss of boating opportunities by helping to eliminate the spread of nuisance aquatic weeds, quagga mussels, and other unwanted aquatic pests.

What can you do?

Inspect your boat!



Inspecting—Thoroughly inspect your boat's hull, outdrive, trim plates, trolling plates, prop guards, transducers, and trailer. If you see any "hitch-hikers," remove them. Remove aquatic plants and plant fragments clinging to the trailer frame, axles, wheels, hitch, motor's lower unit, and interior boat spaces. Spray down your boat and trailer before leaving any lake or stream or at home before setting out for a new boating location.

Draining—Drain **all** bilge water, live wells, and bait buckets before leaving any waterway. Leftover bait **should not** be released or transported.

Remove and dispose of plants on dry land

Stop the spread of aquatic pests!

Giant salvinia, quagga mussels, crayfish, and mud snails most often spread between waterways by hitching a ride on vessels and trailers. When transplanted into new waters, these organisms proliferate, displacing native species and damaging the water resource and your vessel.

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Vessel and Engine Restrictions

Powerboats are restricted to a single electric motor on:

Ackre Lake
Bear Canyon Lake
Bunch Reservoir
Carnero Lake
Chaparral Park Lake
Cluff Ponds
Coconino Reservoir
Coors Lake
Dankworth Pond
Dogtown Reservoir
Fortuna Lake
Goldwater Lake
Granite Basin Lake
Horsethief Basin Lake
Hulsey Lake
J.D. Dam Lake
Knoll Lake
Lee Valley Lake
McKellips Park Lake
Pratt Lake
Quigley Lake
Redondo Lake
Riggs Flat Lake
Roper Lake
Santa Fe Lake
Scott's Reservoir
Sierra Blanca Lake
Soldier Lake (in Coconino Co.)
Stehr Lake
Stoneman Lake
Tunnel Reservoir
Whitehorse Lake
Willow Valley Lake
Woodland Reservoir
Woods Canyon Lake

Powerboats are restricted to using only a single electric motor or a single gasoline engine of 10 horsepower or less on:

Arivaca Lake
Ashurst Lake
Becker Lake
Big Lake
Black Canyon Lake
Blue Ridge Reservoir
Cataract Lake
Chevelon Canyon Lake
Cholla Lake Hot Pond
Concho Lake
Crescent Lake
Fool Hollow Lake
Kaibab Lake
Kinnikinick Lake
Little Mormon Lake
Lower Lake Mary
Luna Lake
Lynx Lake
Marshall Lake
Mexican Hay Lake
Nelson Reservoir
Parker Canyon Lake
Peña Blanca Lake
Rainbow Lake
River Reservoir
Show Low Lake
Whipple Lake
White Mountain Lake (in Apache Co.)
Willow Springs Lake

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Other Restrictions

- Vessels are prohibited on Frye Mesa Reservoir, Rose Canyon Lake, and Snow Flat Lake.
- Vessels are prohibited from entering the following waters during these dates*:
  - The posted portion of Becker Lake from April 1 through July 31
  - The posted portion of Luna Lake from April 1 through July 31
  - The posted portions of the Tonto Arm of Roosevelt Lake from November 15 through February 15
  - The posted portion of Mittry Lake from November 15 through February 28
  - The posted portion of Alamo Lake from December 1 to the end of waterfowl season
  - The posted portion of the Aqua Fria Arm of Lake Pleasant from December 15 to June 15
  - The posted portion of Lynx Lake from December 15 to June 15

* Closure dates may vary. Always check with the lake or the Arizona Game and Fish Department office.

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Arizona Boater's Directory

Arizona Game and Fish Department
5000 W. Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086
602-942-3000

Arizona Game and Fish Department Regional Offices

Flagstaff
3500 S. Lake Mary Rd.
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
928-774-5045

Kingman
5325 N. Stockton Hill Rd.
Kingman, AZ 86409
928-692-7700

Mesa
7200 E. University Ave.
Mesa, AZ 85207
480-981-9400

Pinetop
2878 E. White Mountain Blvd.
Pinetop, AZ 85935
928-367-4281

Tucson
555 N. Greasewood Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85745
520-628-5376

Yuma
9140 E. 28th St.
Yuma, AZ 85365
928-342-0091

Arizona Game and Fish Department Other Important Telephone Numbers

Headquarters 602-942-3000
Boating, Aquatic, and Hunter Education 623-236-7235
Boater Education Class (toll-free).....1-800-824-2456
Hunt Information Line 623-236-7702
Hunter Recruitment and Retention 623-236-7235
Off-Highway Vehicle Information..... 602-942-3000
Operation Game Thief–report wildlife violations 1-800-352-0700
Watercraft Renewal (toll-free).....1-866-462-0433
Weekly Arizona Fishing Report..... 602-942-3000
Weekly Wildlife News..... 623-236-7700

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State Parks

Alamo Lake State Park 928-669-2088
Buckskin Mountain State Park (Colorado River) 928-667-3231
Cattail Cove State Park (Lake Havasu)..... 928-855-1223
Fool Hollow Lake Recreation Area 928-537-3680
Lake Havasu State Park (Windsor Beach)..... 928-855-2784
Lyman Lake State Park 928-337-4441
Patagonia Lake State Park... 520-287-6965
River Island Unit (Colorado River) 928-667-3386
Roper Lake State Park..... 928-428-6760

County Sheriff Offices

Apache County..... 928-337-4321
Cochise County 520-432-9505
Coconino County..... 928-774-4523
Graham County..... 928-428-3141
Greenlee County 928-865-4149
La Paz County 928-669-6141
Maricopa County 602-876-1000
Mohave County..... 928-753-0753
Navajo County..... 928-524-4300
Pima County 520-741-4900
Pinal County 520-866-6800
Santa Cruz County..... 520-761-7869
Yavapai County..... 928-771-3260
Yuma County..... 928-783-4427

Take a Boating Education Class

www.azgfd.gov

623-236-7235

(toll-free) 1-800-824-2456

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Arizona Required Equipment Checklist

	PWC	Boat Less Than 16 Ft.	Boat 16 Ft. To Less Than 26 Ft.*
Certificate of Number On Board	✓	✓	✓
Registration Decals Displayed	✓	✓	✓
Life Jackets (PFDs): Type I, II, III, or V	✓[1]	✓[2]	✓[2]
Throwable PFD: Type IV			✓
Type B-I Fire Extinguisher	✓	✓	✓
Ignition Safety Switch	✓		
Backfire Flame Arrestor	✓	✓[3]	✓[3]
Ventilation System	✓	✓	✓
Muffler	✓	✓	✓
Horn, Whistle, or Bell	✓[4]	✓[4]	✓[4]
Daytime Visual Distress Signals			✓[4]
Nighttime Visual Distress Signals	✓[4]	✓[4]	✓[4]
Navigation Lights	✓	✓	✓

1. Those on PWCs ***must wear*** a Type I, II, or III life jacket (PFD) at all times.
2. Those 12 years of age and younger ***must wear*** a Type I, II, or III PFD while underway on any vessel. See page 36 for more information.
3. Required on inboard engines.
4. Required when boating on federally controlled waters.

**On boats longer than 26 feet, additional equipment is required.*
Refer to pages 38, 40, 44, 46, and 53.

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Boat Safe
Boat Smart
Boat Sober

Take a Boating Class!
For more information, visit our website at www.azgfd.gov or call 623-236-7235

Four principles of safe boating:

1. Wearing life jackets saves lives.
2. Boater education saves lives.
3. Safe boats saves lives.
4. Sober boating saves lives.

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Arizona Game and Fish Department

Everything you need to know about boating in Arizona is just a click away ... on the Web!

- Stay current on all boating safety laws
- Get weekly fishing reports
- Find answers to questions about boat registration and fishing license and regulations
- Learn about state park locations and fees; available camping; and fishing, hiking, and boating activities
- Renew your vessel registration online at www.azgfd.gov/watercraft or call toll-free 1-866-462-0433

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