Your Vessel’s Certificate of Number and Decals

- Requirements for vessel registration vary from state to state. In Arizona, 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 and registration decals are obtained by the owner submitting the proper application and fee to any Arizona Game and Fish Department office.
- 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 three-inch-high BLOCK letters.
  - Number’s color must contrast with its background.
  - Letters must be separated from the numbers by a space or hyphen: **AZ 3717 ZW** or **AZ-3717-ZW**.
  - No other numbers may be displayed on either side of the bow.
  - Decal must be affixed on 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.

Other Facts About Registering Your Vessel

- 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](http://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 (USCG). Call the USCG at **1-800-799-8362** for more information.
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—the same as serial numbers distinguish one car from another.
- Are engraved in the fiberglass or on a metal plate permanently 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 (those manufactured after October 1, 1972, or homemade vessels) must apply to have one issued by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Vessels without a HIN may not be registered.
- It is illegal to remove or alter the HIN.

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 …
- The child's parent or legal guardian is on board or …
- Another person at least 18 years of age is on board.

Registration application forms can be obtained from:
- Any office of the Arizona Game and Fish Department (see list at the back of this manual)
- Many marine dealers

Questions?

Call the Arizona Game and Fish Department at 602-942-3000. Also, you can call or visit one of the AZGFD offices listed at the back of this manual, or visit AZGFD’s website at www.azgfd.gov on the Internet.
Unlawful Operation of a Vessel

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

- **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.
  - 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 in Chapter 3.
    - **Must follow a counterclockwise traffic flow.**
    - Leaving shore must give way to approaching vessels.
  - These rules do not apply on waterways where power-driven vessels are prohibited.

---

**Remember …**

As an owner of a vessel, you are responsible for any injury or damage caused by the negligent operation of your vessel by others you knowingly allow to operate it.

It will be assumed that you have given consent if your vessel is operated by an immediate family member.

---

“wakeless speed” or “no wake speed”

Speed that does not create a wake and is never in excess of five miles per hour

**gunwale**

Upper edge of vessel’s side (generally pronounced “gunnel”)

**overboard**

Over the side or out of the vessel

---

Copyright © 2008 by Boat Ed. All rights reserved. Boat Ed is not responsible or liable for any claims, liabilities, damages, or other adverse effects or consequences to any person or property caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly from the application or use of the information contained in this publication. Boat Ed, 2906 Ladybird Lane, Dallas, TX, 75220
State Law

Alcohol And Drugs
Arizona law prohibits anyone from operating a motor-powered 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 times. Alcohol contributes to about one-third of all fatal boating accidents nationwide. Read more about the effects and risks of consuming alcohol in Chapter 5.

- 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
Vessel operators should always be considerate of other vessel operators even when stopping to anchor or moor. Keep in mind that it is illegal to:

- Operate any vessel in such a way that it will interfere unnecessarily with the safe navigation of other vessels on the waterway.
- Anchor a vessel in the traveled portion of a river or channel in a way that will prevent or interfere with any other vessel passing through the same area.
- Moor or attach a vessel to a buoy (other than a mooring buoy), beacon, light, or any other navigational aid placed on public waters by proper authorities.
- Move, displace, tamper with, damage, or destroy any navigational aid.
- Obstruct a pier, wharf, boat ramp, or access to any facility.
- Interfere unreasonably or unnecessarily with other vessels’ use of the waterways or areas used for launching into the waterways.
- Moor, anchor, or fasten 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.

Homeland Security Restrictions
Recreational boaters have a role in keeping our waterways safe and secure.

- Violators of the restrictions below can expect a quick and severe response.
  - Do not approach within 100 yards and slow to minimum speed within 500 yards of any U.S. Naval vessel. If you need to pass within 100 yards of a U.S. Naval vessel for safe passage, you must contact the U.S. Naval vessel or the U.S. Coast Guard escort vessel on VHF-FM channel 16.
  - Observe and avoid all security zones. Avoid commercial port operation areas, especially those that involve military, cruise-line, or petroleum facilities.
  - Observe and avoid other restricted areas near dams, power plants, etc.
  - Do not stop or anchor beneath bridges or in the channel.
  - Keep a sharp eye out for anything that looks peculiar or out of the ordinary. Report all activities that seem suspicious to the local authorities, the U.S. Coast Guard, or the port or marina security.

Areas of Impairment Due to Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

Avoid all security zones and restricted areas. Keep a sharp eye out for anything that looks peculiar or out of the ordinary.
Personal Flotation Devices (Life Jackets)

All vessels must be equipped with U.S. Coast Guard–approved life jackets, called personal flotation devices (PFDs). The quantity and type depend on the length of your vessel and the number of people on board and/or being towed. Each PFD must be in good condition, be the proper size for the intended wearer, and very importantly, be readily accessible! Readily accessible means you must be able to put the PFD on in a reasonable amount of time in an emergency (vessel sinking, on fire, etc.). PFDs should not be stowed in plastic bags or in locked or closed compartments, and they should not have other gear stowed on top of them.

Vessel operators should ask everyone on their vessel to wear a PFD whenever on the water. **PFDs can save lives, but only if they are worn!**

### PFD Requirements

- 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 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.

### PFD Descriptions

**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 assistance or rescue is likely. Type II vests will turn some unconscious wearers face up in the water, but the turning is not as pronounced as with a Type I.

**TYPE III: Flotation Aids**

These vests or full-sleeved jackets are good for calm waters when quick assistance or rescue is likely. They are not recommended for rough waters since they will not turn most unconscious persons face up. Type III PFDs are used for water sports such as water-skiing. Some Type III PFDs are designed to inflate when you enter the water.

**TYPE IV: Throwable Devices/Not Wearable**

These cushions and ring buoys are designed to be thrown to someone in trouble. Since a Type IV PFD 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. Some Type V PFDs are designed to inflate when you enter the water. To be acceptable, Type V PFDs must be worn and used in accordance with their label.
Fire Extinguishers

- Extinguishers are classified by a letter and number symbol. The number indicates the relative size of the extinguisher, and the letter indicates the type of fire it will extinguish.
  - Type A fires are of combustible solids like wood.
  - Type B fires are of flammable liquids like gasoline or oil.
  - Type C fires are electrical fires.
- All vessels are required to have a Type B 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.

Fire extinguishers must be maintained in usable condition. Inspect extinguishers regularly to ensure the following:
- Seals and tamper indicators are not broken or missing.
- Pressure gauges or indicators read in the operable range.
- There is no physical damage, corrosion, leakage, or clogged nozzles.

Remember …

Keep bilges clean and free of trash in order to reduce the risk of fire.
Backfire Flame Arrestors

Because boat engines may backfire, all powerboats (except outboards) that are fueled with gasoline must have an approved backfire flame arrestor on each carburetor. Backfire flame arrestors are designed to prevent the ignition of gasoline vapors in case the engine backfires.

- Backfire flame arrestors must be:
  - In good and serviceable condition
  - U.S. Coast Guard–approved (must comply with SAE J-1928 or UL 1111 standards)
- Clean the flame arrestor(s) periodically and check for any damage. The elements must be clean, and the grids must be tight enough to prevent flames from passing through. Use soap and water to clean.

Ventilation Systems

Ventilation systems are crucial. Their purpose 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. At least one exhaust duct must extend from the open atmosphere to the lower bilge. At least one intake duct must extend from a point at least midway to the bilge or below the level of the carburetor air intake.
- If your vessel is equipped with a power ventilation system, turn it on for at least four minutes in either of these situations:
  - After fueling
  - Before starting the engine
- If your vessel is not equipped with a power ventilation system (for example, a personal watercraft), open the engine compartment and sniff for gasoline fumes before starting the engine.
- Regularly check the ventilation ducts for obstructions, such as nests or debris. Make sure you can feel air coming out the cowl when the ventilation system is turned on.

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

WARNING:
Gasoline vapors can explode. Before starting engine, operate blower for four minutes and check (using your nose) engine compartment for gasoline vapors.

Vessels built after July 31, 1980, which contain power exhaust blowers in gasoline engine compartments, must have the above warning sticker placed near the instrument panel.

backfire
Explosion of prematurely ignited fuel or of unburned exhaust gases in an internal combustion engine
cowl
Hooded opening designed to scoop in air

Powerboats are built to ventilate the engine when underway. As the boat moves along, an air intake scoops up fresh air and forces it down the air duct into the engine compartment. The exhaust sucks out the explosive fumes from the lowest part of the engine and fuel compartments.
Navigation Lights
- Vessel operators must make sure that their vessels are equipped with the proper navigation lights and use the lights during these conditions:
  - When away from the dock between sunset and sunrise
  - During periods of restricted visibility such as fog or heavy rain
- The different types of navigation lights are described in “Navigation Lights” in Chapter 3. No other lights that may be mistaken for required navigation lights may be exhibited. Note: Blue or red flashing lights are restricted to use by law enforcement vessels only.
- The required navigation lights differ depending on the type and size of your vessel. The common lighting configurations for recreational vessels are discussed below. For other configurations and requirements for larger vessels, see the U.S. Coast Guard’s Navigation Rules.

Power-Driven Vessels Less Than 65.6 Feet Long 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 away—on a dark, clear night.
- An all-round white light if vessel is less than 39.4 feet long or both a masthead light and a sternlight. These lights must be visible from a distance of at least two miles away on a dark, clear night. The all-round white light (or the masthead light) must be at least 3.3 feet (one meter) higher than the sidelights.

Unpowered Vessels When Underway
Unpowered vessels are sailing vessels or vessels that are paddled, poled, or rowed.
- If less than 65.6 feet long, these vessels must exhibit the lights as shown in illustration 2. The required lights are:
  - Red and green sidelights visible from a distance of at least two miles away—or if less than 39.4 feet long, at least one mile away—on a dark, clear night.
  - A sternlight visible from a distance of 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 in length.
  - If not practical, have on hand at least one lantern or flashlight shining a white light as shown 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.

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.

To prevent a collision, 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.
Visual Distress Signals

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

- Vessels on federally controlled waters must be equipped with U.S. Coast Guard–approved visual distress signals. 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
- VDSs must be U.S. Coast Guard–approved, in serviceable condition, and readily accessible.

Pyrotechnic Devices

- Pyrotechnics are excellent distress signals. However, there is potential for injury and property damage if not handled properly. These devices produce a very hot flame, and the residue can cause burns and ignite flammable materials.
- Pistol-launched and handheld parachute flares and meteors have many characteristics of a firearm and must be handled with caution. In some states, they are considered a firearm and are prohibited from use.
- Pyrotechnic devices should be stored in a cool, dry, and prominently marked location.

Non-Pyrotechnic Devices

- The distress flag is a day signal only. It must be at least 3 x 3 feet with a black square and ball on an orange background.
- The electric distress light is accepted for night use only and must flash the international SOS distress signal automatically.

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

Waters on which vessels must observe federal requirements, including VDS requirements; these waters include:
- Coastal waters
- The Great Lakes
- Territorial seas
- Colorado River and Lake System
- Bodies of water connected directly to one of the above, up to a point where the body of water is less than two miles wide
Common 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 sailing vessels.

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.

### Other Equipment and Regulations

**Diver-Down Flags:** Scuba divers or snorkelers must display a diver-down flag that marks 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 is 100 yards.
- The diver-down flag that is recognized and used on Arizona waters, including the Colorado River and Lake Systems, is a rectangular red flag with a white diagonal stripe.
- A blue and white international Code Flag A (or Alfa flag) is recognized and used on federally controlled or international waters.

**Skier-Down Flag:** Arizona law requires that vessels towing person(s) on water skis or similar devices carry and use a red or orange skier-down flag, at least 12 x 12 inches in size and mounted on a handle, whenever a skier is in the water after falling or while preparing to ski.

**Marine Events:** In order to hold a race, regatta, or tournament on federally controlled waters, a permit from the U.S. Coast Guard is required. 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. 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.

**Local Regulations:** Many waterways in Arizona have special regulations such as horsepower restrictions or speed limits. Be sure to check for special restrictions on a waterway before you go boating.
Requirements Specific to Personal Watercraft (PWCs)

In addition to adhering to all boating laws, personal watercraft (PWC) operators have requirements specific to their vessel.

◆ 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.
  • 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.

Towing a Person with a Vessel Legally

Vessel operators towing a person(s) on water skis, a surfboard, or similar devices must obey these laws also.

◆ 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.

◆ 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.
Waste, Oil, and Trash Disposal in Arizona and Federal Waters

- It is illegal to discharge waste, oil, or trash into any federally controlled or Arizona waters. This is for very good reasons.
  - Sewage carries disease and other pollutants that are harmful to people, aquatic plants, and animals.
  - Trash thrown into the water can injure swimmers and wildlife alike. It also can plug engine cooling water intakes.
  - Pollution is unsightly and takes away from your enjoyment of the water.

- Vessel operators need to be aware of the following regulations for waste, oil, and trash disposal that apply to both federally controlled and state waters. The Refuse Act prohibits throwing, discharging, or depositing any refuse matter of any kind (including trash, garbage, oil, and other liquid pollutants) into the waters of the United States.

Discharge of Sewage and Waste

- State law prohibits 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 recreational vessel with installed toilet facilities, it must have an operable marine sanitation device (MSD) on board. There are three types of MSDs.
  - Types I and II MSDs are usually found on large vessels. Waste is treated with special chemicals to kill bacteria before the waste is discharged. Types I and II MSDs with “Y” valves that would direct the waste overboard must be secured so that the valve cannot be opened. This can be done by placing a lock or non-reusable seal on the “Y” valve or by taking the handle off the “Y” valve.
  - Type III MSDs provide no treatment and are either holding tanks or portable toilets. Collected waste should be taken ashore and disposed of in a pump-out station or onshore toilet.

- Vessels 65 feet or less in length may use a Type I, II, or III MSD. Vessels more than 65 feet in length must install a Type II or III MSD.

- All installed devices must be U.S. Coast Guard–certified.

Discharge of Trash

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

- 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 in a prominent location. The Garbage Disposal Placard is a durable sign that is at least 4 x 9 inches and notifies passengers and crew about discharge restrictions.

It is illegal for any vessel to dump plastic trash anywhere in the ocean or navigable waters of the United States. Annex V of the MARPOL TREATY is a new International Law for a cleaner, safer marine environment. Each violation of these requirements may result in civil penalty up to $25,000, a fine up to $50,000, and imprisonment up to 5 years.

Copyright © 2008 by Boat Ed. All rights reserved. Boat Ed is not responsible or liable for any claims, liabilities, damages, or other adverse effects or consequences to any person or property caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly from the application or use of the information contained in this publication. Boat Ed, 2906 Ladybird Lane, Dallas, TX, 75220
Discharge of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances

Regulations issued under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act require all vessels with propulsion machinery to be able to retain oil mixtures on board.

◆ You are not allowed to discharge oil or hazardous substances. The penalty for illegal discharge may be a fine of up to $10,000.

◆ You are not allowed to dump oil into the bilge of the vessel without means for proper disposal. Fuel spills can be removed using absorbent bilge pads.

◆ You must dispose of oil waste at an approved reception facility. On recreational vessels, a bucket or bailer is adequate for temporary storage prior to disposing of the oil waste at an approved facility.

◆ You must notify the U.S. Coast Guard immediately if your vessel discharges oil or hazardous substances in the water. Call toll-free 1-800-424-8802. Report the discharge’s location, color, source, substances, size, and time observed. You also must call the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and report the discharge.

◆ If boating on federally controlled waters and your vessel is 26 feet or longer, you must display a 5 x 8-inch placard made of durable material, fixed in a conspicuous place in the machinery spaces or at the bilge pump control station, stating the following:

**Discharge of Oil Prohibited**
The Federal Water Pollution Control Act prohibits the discharge of oil or oily waste upon or into any navigable waters of the U.S. The prohibition includes any discharge which causes a film or discoloration of the surface of the water or causes a sludge or emulsion beneath the surface of the water. Violators are subject to substantial civil and/or criminal sanctions including fines and imprisonment.

Waste Management Plan

◆ Ocean-going vessels that are 40 feet or more in length with cooking and sleeping facilities must have a written Waste Management Plan.

◆ The captain of the vessel is responsible for implementing the Waste Management Plan.

◆ The Waste Management Plan, identifying the vessel’s name and home port, should be posted and should include directives to all persons on board about:
  • Discharging sewage and hazardous substances
  • Discharging garbage and other food waste
  • Disposing of plastics, bottles, and cans
  • Reading applicable placards for additional information
  • Advising the captain in case of oily discharges or diesel spills

Outboard Emissions

◆ Many powerboats and nearly all PWCs are equipped with two-stroke engines. Conventional two-stroke engines produce roughly 14 times as much ozone-forming pollution as four-stroke engines. Also, 25-30% of the fuel and oil of two-stroke engines is discharged unburned with a portion lingering in the water column for a period of time.

◆ New federal emission standards for marine engines are being phased in gradually. Many manufacturers are meeting these requirements currently with clean-burning engines already available. The new technology provides easier starting, faster acceleration, quicker throttle response, improved fuel economy, and a reduction in fumes and noise.

◆ Even though vessel engines currently in use are not affected by the phase-in, retiring them will help aquatic environments.

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.

To prevent spreading these aquatic pests:

• Thoroughly inspect your vessel’s hull, outdrive, trim plates, trolling plates, prop guards, transducers, and trailers. If you see any “hitchhikers,” remove them. Remove aquatic plants clinging to the trailer frame, axles, wheels, hitch, motor’s lower unit, and interior vessel spaces.

• Spray down your vessel and trailer before leaving any lake or stream or at home before setting out for a new boating location.

• Drain all bilge water, live wells, and bait buckets before leaving any waterway. Leftover bait should not be released or transported.
Boating Accidents and Casualties ... What the Law Requires You To Do

◆ 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, 2221 W. Greenway Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85023.
  - 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.

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.

◆ Officers also may establish checkpoints on the waterways to ensure public safety.

Remember…

On waterways common with other states, such as the Colorado River, other states’ laws and federal regulations may apply. Always know the boating laws and regulations that apply where you are boating.