



WATER SAFETY

By Brent and Larita Humble
Boating Safety Committee

As Chairpersons of Lake Cavanaugh's Water Safety Committee, we would like to take this opportunity to remind boaters to conduct themselves in a safe and sane manner. Some important Skagit County boating regulations to remember are:

- Water skiing is prohibited ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour after sunrise, and shall be in a counter-clockwise manner on the lake at least 150 feet from docks.
- All vessels are required to have navigation lights when operating during hours of darkness. (Personal watercraft have no running lights, therefore, are not allowed to operate during the period from sunset until sunrise).
- Personal watercraft should never jump wakes or follow a boat that is towing a skier, tuber, etc. (Serious injury could occur if the towee should happen to fall in the path of the watercraft.)

- All boats, including personal watercraft, should adhere to the no wake speed/5 MPH within 150 feet of the shoreline, docks, floats, or other boats unless taking off or landing a water skier.
- Motorboat/PWC operators must carry their Boater Certification card while operating a vessel 15 HP or more (age applicable).

Regarding personal watercraft, the committee suggests that stunts, such as 360's and wave jumping, be performed in the center of the lake to reduce the noise level and to increase safety by avoiding water skiers/tubers.

We would also like to suggest that you post this copy of the Skagit County boating regulations and/or accompanying articles and information on your refrigerator, coffee table or other convenient location, to be used as an easy reference guide.

**LET'S PLEASE BE
KIND TO OUR
NEIGHBORS AND
USE OUR
COMMON SENSE.**

SKAGIT COUNTY BOATING REGULATIONS

All boats must meet the requirements of applicable state and federal law, and US Coast Guard regulations.

REGISTRATION

1. Owners of all recreational boats must apply for a title and registration at a County Auditor's office.
2. **EXEMPT:** Vessels under 16' with 10 or less horsepower.
3. Registration numbers must be permanently attached on each side of the hull in 3" contrasting letters

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

1. **PFD's:** Vessel must carry one US Coast Guard approved personal flotation device for each person aboard. PFD's must be worn by **all** occupants of **vessels 19' in length or less**, while vessel is underway.
2. **Sound Signals:** One whistle, horn, or other device capable of producing whistle blasts.
3. **Navigation Lights:** Required for night operation and must conform to USCG regulations or on manually propelled vessels, a white light of sufficient brightness must be available to display in time to avoid a collision.
4. **Fire Extinguisher:** Approved USCG extinguisher required if fuel tanks are permanently installed or in closed compartments.



GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Lake Cavanaugh speed limit is **40 mph**.
2. No vessel shall be operated in a negligent or reckless manner that would endanger persons or property.
3. All motorboats shall be operated **150' from the shoreline, dock, float, or other boat, except at its idle/ 5 MPH "no wake" speed.**
4. Swimming activities beyond 150' of the shoreline shall be accompanied by an attendant in a boat.
5. Operation of a motorboat while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drug is **illegal**.
6. Minimum age to operate a motor boat powered by a motor of 15 HP or more is **16 years of age**.
7. The operator of every boat involved in an accident is required by law to file a report in writing whenever a boating accident results in a loss of life, injury which required medical treatment beyond first aid, property damage over \$200.00, or a disappearance of a person.
8. It is **illegal** to throw any litter overboard into any waterway. Recreational boats must carry a litter bag.
9. **Teak surfing** is illegal and constitutes a \$100 fine.
10. **Vessel Capacity:** Check maximum weight and number of persons plate on boat for safe loading.
11. **Boater Certification Card:** Operators must carry card while operating a vessel 15 HP or more (age applicable per mandatory education and calendar year)



WATER SKIING/TUBING RULES

1. Recreational boats which are towing a person or persons shall be occupied by **both an operator over the age of 16 and a competent observer**.
2. The observer shall continuously **observe** the persons being towed and shall display a **12" by 12" bright red flag** attached to a 24" handle whenever the persons are in the water.
3. All water skiers/tubers must wear a USCG approved personal flotation device.
4. Water skiing/tubing is **prohibited ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour after sunrise**, not even using running lights.
5. When moving toward or away from the shore, dock, or float, the water skier/tuber will travel at an angle between 45 and 60 degrees from the shoreline on the right-hand side of the skier.
6. All water skiing/tubing shall be in a **counter-clockwise** manner on the lake at least **150'** from docks, etc.



PERSONAL WATERCRAFT RULES

1. No person shall operate or ride on a personal watercraft without wearing a USCG approved flotation device.
2. A person operating a personal watercraft equipped by the manufacturer with a lanyard type engine cutoff switch must attach the lanyard to his or her person, clothing, or personal flotation device.
3. No person shall operate a personal watercraft on the waters of Washington during the period from **½ hour after sunset until ½ hour after sunrise**.
4. Operators of personal watercraft in Washington State **must** be at least **14 years of age**.

