

The Blue Sea Lake Watershed Association promotes:

Safe, Courteous, and 'Green' Boating



The topics addressed in this boating pamphlet include waterskiing, tubing, wakeboarding, and the use of personal watercraft; activities that many of us enjoy. The aim of the pamphlet is to suggest ways by which we can minimize the potential negative impact of these activities on our friends, our neighbours and the environment.

The “**Safe Boating**” guidelines detailed in this article reflect the recreational boating laws spelled out in the Transport Canada Safe

Boating Guide - publication TP 511 E (2011). Keep a copy of this publication at the cottage and re-read it every year before you launch your boat. Remember that the recognized Canadian speed limit on the water is **10 kilometres per hour within 30 metres of shore**.

Also be aware that:

- operating carelessly, without due care and attention or reasonable consideration for others, is an offence under the Small Vessel Regulation;
- operating in a way that's dangerous to the public, including while being impaired, is a Criminal Code offence; and
- as of September 15, 2009, operators must carry the original Pleasure Craft Operators Card with them while on board.

The “**Good Neighbours**” portion of the article spells out how we can be more considerate of others on the lake.

Remember: If you witness unsafe boating activity do not hesitate to communicate your concerns to the Blue Sea Lake Watershed Association, municipal officials or the Sureté de Québec. A visual record can be very useful in providing a clear explanation of such activity.

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT (PWC)

Your PWC is designed for fun so by all means, take it out for a ride! But be careful. PWC's are involved in a disproportionate number of boating accidents.

“Safe Boating”

- Operators must be 16 years of age or older and have an operator's card while on board.
- You must have a minimum of three seats in any craft used for towing. This includes one

each for the operator, spotter and for each person being towed.

“Good Neighbours”

- Keep well away from small boats and people. Buzzing or circling around canoes, kayaks or swimmers poses a safety hazard.
- If you want to perform acrobatic manoeuvres, go to the middle of the lake to do so.
- Avoid approaching other vessels too closely, even if they're operated by friends or relatives.

WATERSKIING, TUBING AND WAKEBOARDING

Your first consideration when engaged in any of these activities must be safety. If you're operating your vessel safely, you're also much less likely to annoy your neighbours.

“Safe Boating”

- Towboats must have an operator, a spotter and a seat for each person being towed.
- No towing is allowed when visibility is poor, or from one hour after sunset to sunrise.
- Those being towed must wear an approved personal flotation device (PFD).
- Know and obey the rules governing right-of-way.
- You can take off from the shore at speed provided you drive straight out.

“Good Neighbours”

- Keep well beyond the 30 metre limit to avoid swimmers and boaters near the shore.
- Don't swing your riders in front of other people's docks. Drop them outside the 30-metre limit, or come in and out perpendicular to your shoreline. Watch for and avoid milfoil.

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- Avoid multiple runs in the same area. Vary your route so as not to annoy your neighbours.
- Keep a safe distance from other tow boats as they may stop and turn without notice.
- Don't tow near canoes, kayaks, sailboats or small outboards. Your wake can capsize them.
- Concentrate! Most boating incidents are caused by operators not paying attention. Boat operators must look ahead while spotters must look behind.

More For Wakeboarding and Wakesurfing:

Current regulations concerning ski boats were designed to stop the wake created by these boats from adversely affecting the shoreline. Operating these vessels at least 30 metres from shore helps to minimize shoreline erosion by allowing increased time and distance for the boat wake to dissipate. Be aware that the current Federal guidelines were developed before the advent of wake boats. 30 metres is inadequate for the large wake generated by a wake boat.

“Good Neighbours”

- Keep at least 300 metres off shore when wakeboarding/wakesurfing. Your wake can damage docks, moored boats, the shoreline, and wildlife habitat.
- Avoid repeated runs in front of the same properties. Noisy activities can be a source of annoyance for our neighbours and repetition can increase the potential for environmental damage. Try to vary your route frequently.

NOISY BOATS

Boats with through-hull exhaust and little or no muffling are the greatest source of annoyance to others on our waterways.

“Safe Boating”

- Boats must have a muffler designed to eliminate excessive or unusual noise, and be in good working order at all times.
- If you don't have a muffler, the exhaust must be directed through the propeller hub or underwater unless you are 8 kms from shore.
- Outboards and inboard/outboards must direct their exhaust through the propeller hub or below the cavitation plate.

“Good Neighbours”

- Muffle your engine. A noisy engine can greatly disturb the peace of those around you. Help everyone enjoy their time at the lake by being a thoughtful boater.
- Similar to the ban on open exhausts, no boat should have a speaker system that has been specifically designed or positioned to be heard outside of the boat. Loud music both on and off the water can be a significant source of friction between neighbours.

‘GREEN’ BOATING

- Before launching your boat, thoroughly clean it and your trailer well away from the waterway. Use suds only on land, far from the lake. Once your boat is in the water, get rid of the cleaners and use old-fashioned elbow grease.
- Apply bottom wax to your hull at least once a season.
- When choosing cleaning products, look for the “EcoLogo” label - a registered mark of Environment Canada.
- When taking your boat out of the water, remove any debris and clean out your bilge, again well away from the water.
- Consider replacing your old two-stroke engine with a low-emission model. Match engine power to boat size. Tune up your engine and keep it tuned up all summer long.

- Plan to be a “green boater” - don't churn up the lake bottom or create wakes that can erode the shoreline (don't operate your speed/tow boat at more than 10 kph within 30 metres of the shore and don't “wakeboard” within 300 metres of shore).
- Stay a safe distance from wildlife. Loons and their young are particularly vulnerable to wakes and props.
- Avoid areas containing milfoil and other aquatic plants. Disturbing them with your propeller/turbine engine helps them spread.
- Save fuel by turning your engine off while anchoring, floating, or parked at the dock.
- Prevent fuel spills by using or installing a device to prevent overboard discharges from your tank vent. Always fill your tank slowly and only to 90% of tank capacity. Because fuel expands as the temperature rises, leaving room at the top of your tank will help prevent fuel from overflowing as the day heats up.
- Properly dispose of all hazardous products used in maintaining or operating your boat. Check local rules and regulations for specific instructions.
- Maintain a clean bilge. Consider using a bioremediation product such as BIO-SOK to convert hydrocarbons to safe compounds.
- Keep your trash on board and never throw cigarette butts, fishing line, or any other garbage into the lake. Recycle plastic, glass, metal and paper.

These ‘Green’ Boating tips are drawn from articles in Cottage Life www.cottagelife.com and Discover Boating www.discoverboating.ca.

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