

NORTH DAKOTA 2026-28

BOAT AND WATER SAFETY GUIDE



NORTH
Dakota | Game and Fish
Be Legendary.



GENERAL INFORMATION

NORTH DAKOTA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

100 N. Bismarck Expressway

Bismarck, ND 58501-5095

701-328-6300

- Devils Lake Office, 701-662-3617
- Dickinson Office, 701-227-7431
- Lonetree Office, 701-328-6332
- Riverdale Office, 701-328-1190
- Jamestown Office, 701-253-6480
- Williston Office, 701-774-4320



gf.nd.gov

REPORT VIOLATIONS

Contact game wardens and other law enforcement officers by calling:

State Radio Communications 701-328-9921



TABLE OF CONTENTS

What Class Are You In?	4
Definitions	6
Who Must Register Their Boats	8
Registration Fees and Renewal Dates	8
Change of Address or Ownership	10
Loss of Certificate of Number	11
Boat Dealers	12
Attaching the Number to the Boat.....	12
Display of Numbers and Registration Decal.....	12
Nonresidents.....	13
Aquatic Nuisance Species Sticker	13
Display of ANS Sticker for Out-of-State Boats.....	13
Boat Operator Requirements	15
Collisions, Accidents, Casualties and Liability	15
Personal Watercraft	16
Water-skiing and Surfboards.....	17
Nonmotorized Boats.....	18
Paddlesports Safety	19
Boats for Rent.....	20
Boat Capacity	20
Personal Floatation Devices	21
U.S. Coast Guard Approved PFDs.....	21
Prohibited Operation.....	22
Regulation of Noise From Boats	23
Boating Under Influence	23
Termination of Unsafe Use.....	24
Carbon Monoxide	24
Hypothermia.....	25
Diver Flags	26
Lighting.....	26
Buoys	28
Sanitation Devices	28
Regattas, Races, Marine Parades, Tournaments or Exhibitions.....	29
Outboard Motor Serial Numbers	29
Boat Motor Restrictions.....	30
Out-of-State Operation.....	31

MEASURE YOUR BOAT TO DETERMINE WHAT CLASS IT IS IN

When measuring a vessel, measure from the forward end to the after end across the deck down the center line, excluding the sheer. This means in a straight line and only that part of the hull that is permanent.

EQUIPMENT	CLASS A (Under 16 feet in length)	CLASS 1 (16 feet, but under 26 feet)
Registration and Numbering	Every motorboat, principally used in North Dakota, that is powered by any motor (including electric motors) must be registered with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.	
Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) (See page 16 re: youngsters 10 years and younger.)	One U.S. Coast Guard approved wearable PFD for each person aboard. Anyone being towed on waterskis, surfboard or similar device must wear a USCG approved PFD while being towed (see pages 16-17). No person may operate or permit the operation of a personal watercraft without each person on board the personal watercraft wearing a Coast Guard approved Type, I, II, III or V PFD.	One Coast Guard approved USCG approved PFD for each person aboard, plus one Type IV throwable PFD in each boat. Anyone being towed on waterskis, surfboard or similar device must wear a USCG approved PFD while being towed (see pages 16-17).
Backfire Flame Arrestors	One Coast Guard approved device is required on each carburetor of all gasoline powered engines, except outboard motors.	
Fire Extinguishers	1. None required unless the boat has: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Double bottom not sealed to the hull or not completely filled with flotation material; or Closed stowage compartments in which combustible or flammable materials are stored; or Closed compartments under thwarts and seats where portable fuel tanks may be stored; or Closed living spaces; or Permanently installed fuel tanks. If any of the above applies, a Coast Guard approved Type 5-B or 10-B portable extinguisher or a fixed fire extinguishing system in the machinery spaces is required.	
Ventilation	All motorboats operating with enclosed engine or fuel compartments and using gasoline as fuel, must have at least two ventilator ducts fitted with cowls, or the equivalent leading to each such compartment to properly and efficiently ventilate the compartment.	
Lighting	All motorboats operating between sunset and sunrise shall exhibit a proper light display. Proper light displays are explained on pages 22-23 of this guide.	
Whistles	Required.	One hand, mouth or power operated whistle audible for at least 1/2 mile.
Bells	None required.	None required.

ALL EQUIPMENT MUST BE IN SERVICEABLE CONDITION

CLASS 2 (26 feet, but under 40 feet)	CLASS 3 (40 feet or over in length)
Every motorboat, principally used in North Dakota, that is powered by any motor (including electric motors) must be registered with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.	
One U.S. Coast Guard approved wearable PFD for each person aboard, plus one Type IV throwable PFD in each boat. Anyone being towed on waterskis, surfboard or similar device must wear a USCG approved PFD while being towed (see pages 16-17).	
One Coast Guard approved device is required on each carburetor of all gasoline powered engines, except outboard motors.	
Two Coast Guard approved 5-B or 10-B type portable extinguisher, OR one Coast Guard approved 20-B type portable extinguishers, OR a fixed fire extinguishing system in the machinery spaces and one Coast Guard approved 5-B or 10-B type portable extinguisher.	Either three Coast Guard approved 5-B or 10-B OR one 20-B AND one 5-B or 10-B type portable extinguishers, OR one Coast Guard approved B-II type portable extinguisher and one Coast Guard approved B-I type portable extinguisher, OR a fixed fire extinguishing system in the machinery spaces along with one Coast Guard approved 5-B or 10-B type OR one Coast Guard approved 20-B type portable extinguishers.
All motorboats operating with enclosed engine or fuel compartments and using gasoline as fuel, must have at least two ventilator ducts fitted with cowls, or the equivalent leading to each such compartment to properly and efficiently ventilate the compartment.	
All motorboats operating between sunset and sunrise shall exhibit a proper light display. Proper light displays are explained on pages 22-23 of this guide.	
One hand or power operated whistle audible at least 1 mile.	One power operated whistle audible for at least 1 mile.
A bell which produces a clear bell-like tone when struck.	

DEFINITIONS

1. **Associated equipment** means:

- a. Any system, part or component of a boat as originally manufactured, or any similar part or component manufactured or sold for replacement, repair or improvement of such system, part or component;
- b. Any accessory or equipment for, or appurtenance to, a boat; and
- c. Any marine safety article, accessory or equipment intended for use by a person on board a boat; but
- d. Excluding radio equipment.

2. **Boat** means any vessel:

- a. Manufactured or used primarily for noncommercial use;
- b. Leased, rented or chartered to another for the latter's noncommercial use; or
- c. Engaged in the carrying of six or fewer passengers.

3. **Manufacturer** means any person engaged in:

- a. The manufacture, construction or assembly of boats or associated equipment;
- b. The manufacture or construction of components for boats and associated equipment to be sold for subsequent assembly; and
- c. The importation into the state for sale of boats, associated equipment or components thereof.

4. **Motorboat** means any vessel propelled by machinery, whether or not the machinery is the principal source of propulsion. The term does not include a vessel having a valid marine document issued by the U.S. Bureau of Customs or any federal agency successor thereto.

5. **Operate** means to navigate or otherwise use a motorboat or a vessel.

6. **Owner** means a person, other than a lienholder, having property in or title to a motorboat. The term includes a person entitled to the use or possession of a motorboat

subject to an interest in another person, reserved or created by agreement and securing payment or performance of an obligation, but the term excludes a lessee under a lease not intended as security.

- 7. Passenger** means every person carried on board a vessel other than:
- a. The owner or the owner's representative;
 - b. The operator;
 - c. Bona fide members of the crew engaged in the business of the vessel who have contributed no consideration for their carriage and who are paid for their services; or
 - d. Any guest on board a vessel which is being used exclusively for pleasure purposes who has not contributed any consideration, directly or indirectly, for that person's carriage.
- 8. Personal watercraft** means a motorboat that is powered by an inboard motor powering a water jet pump or by an inboard or outboard marine engine and which is designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing or kneeling on the craft, rather than in a conventional manner of sitting or standing inside a motorboat.
- 9. Slow or no wake speed** means the slowest possible speed necessary to maintain steerage.
- 10. Undocumented vessel** means a vessel which does not have a valid marine document as a vessel of the United States.
- 11. Vessel** means any watercraft, other than a seaplane on the water, used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on water.
- 12. Waters** when not qualified means waters not open to the general public.
- 13. Waters of the state** means all waters of this state, including boundary waters. This title extends to and is in force and effect over, upon and in all such waters.

WATERCRAFT REGISTRATION

North Dakota is a registration state and does not issue titles for any watercraft, motor or trailer.

If a watercraft is purchased from outside of North Dakota, then it may have a title from that state. Watercraft that are purchased brand new from a dealer will be given a Certificate of Origin. In either of these cases, it is important to keep those documents on hand and filed in a manner that they can be accessed upon a sale or if the watercraft returns to a titling state.

Owners of any watercraft propelled by a motor and used primarily within the state of North Dakota must register their vessels with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. This does include pedal boats, kayaks, and canoes that have a motor placed on them. As well as eFoils, GoBoats, and similar products. The vessel owner will receive a watercraft registration Certificate of Number that must be available on the vessel when in operation. The certificate of number (registration card) is proof of ownership in ND. The registration can be applied for in 1 person or 1 business/organization name.

While not required, non-motorized watercraft are encouraged to be registered. Registration provides a means to return lost or stolen vessels to their owner, may be needed in other states for recreational purposes and can also provide contact information in case of an emergency.

Exemptions:

1. North Dakota law permits the use of boats legally numbered under the numbering system of another state for a period of 90 days.
2. Motorboats from foreign countries may temporarily use the waters of North Dakota without a certificate of number.

HOW TO RENEW WATERCRAFT REGISTRATIONS ONLINE

Online renewals are fast and efficient. The registered owner can log into their My Account page. Scroll down to Watercraft and select – Renew Watercraft – complete checkout and a temporary receipt will be available for print or downloaded. Registration cards and decals will be printed and mailed the following business day.

HOW TO REGISTER WATERCRAFT ONLINE

Registration of a new watercraft, purchased from a dealer or private individual, or any transfer of watercraft ownership, must be completed online.

Proof of a completed title or registration with signed detailed bill of sale is required for casual sales.

Submit your registration within 15 days at gf.nd.gov by logging into your “My Account”. Scroll down to watercraft and select – “Register New Watercraft” and complete online application.

Sales Tax is required when watercrafts are purchased from a business in the business of buying and selling watercrafts. If taxes are not collected from the business, then they need to be paid to the ND Office of State Tax Commissioner. Online payments with a copy of the purchase invoice can be made to <https://tap.tax/nd/gov>

Casual sales from person to person are not subject to sales or use tax.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR OWNERSHIP

NOTICE: If any of the following instances occur, you are required to notify the Game and Fish Department within 15 days:

Change of address

Change of boat ownership

Boat is destroyed or abandoned

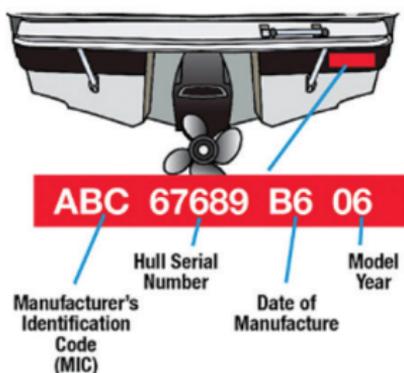
Boat is stolen or recovered

The license registration decal is not transferable. Anyone purchasing a boat must register the boat in their name even if the boat already has been registered by the previous owner and has a current registration decal. License registration decal expire at the time of change in ownership.

Any watercraft that has been registered or titled regardless of operation status is required to submit a transfer of ownership.

HULL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (HIN)

A hull identification number (HIN) is the serial number



of the watercraft. The USCG required all manufacturers to assign a unique 12-character HIN to all watercrafts manufactured after Nov. 1, 1972. The HIN is required to be on the boat in two different locations. The primary location is on the top right corner of the transom. The secondary location would

be affixed in an unexposed location on the interior of the watercraft. The location may slightly vary on the watercraft types such as a kayak, canoe or pontoon.

If a HIN cannot be located, a state issued HIN will be assigned at the time of online registration or renewal. A picture of the HIN permanently affixed to the transom will be required before the application is approved.

REGISTRATION FEES, AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES FEE AND RENEWAL DATES

Registration period is from Jan. 1, 2026 through Dec. 31, 2028. Fees are prorated by the year in the registration cycle.

MOTORBOATS under 16 feet in length and all canoes regardless of length, powered by a motor – \$30.

MOTORBOATS 16 feet in length and over but shorter than 20 feet in length, excluding canoes – \$45.

MOTORBOATS 20 feet in length or over, excluding canoes – \$60.

An ANS fee of \$15 for each motorized watercraft registered in North Dakota is also required. This fee is also prorated to match the registration cycle.

LOSS OF LICENSE REGISTRATION DECAL

The Department is not liable for lost, stolen or damaged decals. Replacement decals may be purchased at gf.nd.gov for \$10. The purchase of a replacement decal will void the previous decal.

“My Account” – “Watercraft” – “Purchase Replacement Decals.”

BOAT DEALERS

A dealer may purchase a Certificate of Number for demonstration. The dealer's number may be transferred from one boat to another for demonstration purposes but must be securely fastened in such a manner as to be clearly legible.

Dealer demonstration numbers are for short-term sales demonstration purposes only. This does not cover personal use by sales personnel, dealer or business owner.

CERTIFICATE OF NUMBER — REGISTRATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

The number appearing on the certificate of number must be painted or permanently attached to each side of the forward half of the vessel near the bow. The number must be in contrasting color to the hull in plain vertical block letters at least 3 inches in height excluding any border, trim, outlining or shading, and must be maintained in a legible condition so that it is clearly visible in daylight hours. The number shall read from left to right, and groups of numbers and letters must be separated by a space or a hyphen equivalent in width to the letter "M." A validation registration decal issued by the Department must be displayed on the boat within 6 inches of the number, toward the rear of the boat. No other numbers are to be displayed in this area. Any alteration of the registration decal will void the registration.

DISPLAY OF NUMBERS AND REGISTRATION DECAL



NONRESIDENT MOTORIZED BOATS AND AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES FEE

All motorized watercraft not licensed in this state and operated on North Dakota waters must annually obtain a valid, nonrefundable aquatic nuisance species sticker. The fee is \$15 per year per vessel.

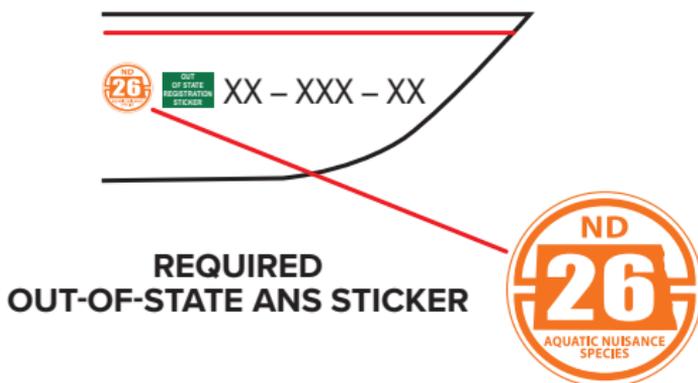
ANS stickers are sold online at gf.nd.gov "My Account" – "Watercraft" – "Purchase Aquatic Nuisance sticker." Owners name, registration state and registration number are required for purchase.

This ANS sticker must be placed on the starboard side of the watercraft within 6 inches of the registration number and displayed within 10 days of purchase.

Each licensed watercraft is listed on the purchase receipt. A copy of the purchase receipt is proof of ANS fee payment until your sticker is received by mail.

The Department is not liable for lost, stolen or damaged stickers.

DISPLAY OF ANS STICKER FOR OUT-OF-STATE WATERCRAFTS



AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES

HELP PROTECT NORTH DAKOTA WATERS FOR THE FUTURE

Aquatic nuisance species are nonnative plants and animals that threaten our lakes and streams. They are very difficult to control once they become established, and can be moved accidentally on boats, trailers and other equipment.

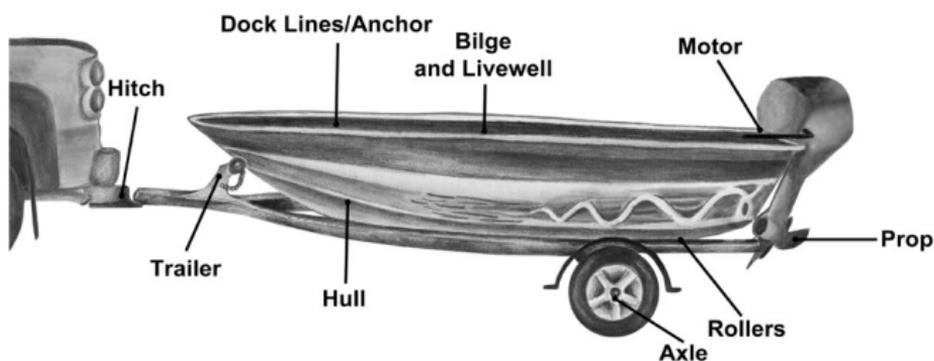
Three simple steps can prevent the spread of ANS:

CLEAN – Inspect all equipment and remove any plants, animals, and mud before leaving a water access site.

DRAIN – Allow all water to drain completely before leaving the water access site.

DRY – Allow all equipment to dry completely or wash with hot water (140°F) before using again.

Places to Check



To view current ANS news and species identification or file a report.
gf.nd.gov/ans

BOAT OPERATOR REQUIREMENTS

No person under 12 years of age may operate a motorboat (includes personal watercraft, jetskis, etc.) propelled by more than a 10 horsepower motor unless the operator is accompanied by a person 18 years of age or older.

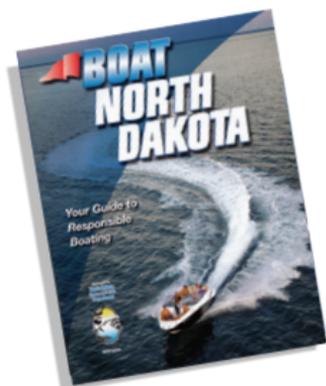
No person 12 through 15 years of age may operate a motorboat (includes personal watercraft, jetskis, etc.) propelled by more than a 10 horsepower motor unless the operator is accompanied by a person 18 years of age or older or the operator has taken and passed a boating course approved by the Department.

No person may cause or knowingly permit a minor under 16 years of age to operate a motorboat propelled by more than a 10 horsepower motor unless the minor is otherwise authorized to do so by this section.

BOAT NORTH DAKOTA

YOUR GUIDE TO RESPONSIBLE BOATING

Request a copy – 701-328-6300
gn.nd.gov/education/boating



COLLISIONS, ACCIDENTS, CASUALTIES AND LIABILITY

The operator/owner of a vessel used for recreational purposes is required to file a report in writing whenever an accident results in loss of life or disappearance from a vessel; an injury which requires medical treatment beyond first aid; or property damage in excess of \$2,000 or complete loss of the vessel. Reports of death or injury cases must be submitted

within 48 hours. Reports in other cases must be submitted within 10 days. Reports must be submitted to the reporting authority in the state where the accident occurred to your local game warden or to NDGF enforcement by mailing to 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501.

The report form can be found at gf.nd.gov/boating/boating-accident-report-form

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT – JET SKI

No person may operate or permit the operation of a personal watercraft:

- a. Without each person on board the personal watercraft wearing a U.S. Coast Guard approved type I, II, III or V personal flotation device;
- b. Within 100 feet of a person fishing from a shoreline, swimmer, swimming/diving raft, or an occupied, anchored, or nonmotorized vessel at greater than slow or no-wake speed;
- c. While towing an individual on water skis, kneeboard, inflatable craft, or any other device unless an observer is on board or the personal watercraft is equipped with a mirror on each side which provides the operator an unobstructed field of vision to the rear;
- d. Without a lanyard-type engine cutoff switch being attached to the person, clothing or personal flotation device of the operator, if the personal watercraft is equipped by the manufacturer with such a device;
- e. If any part of the spring-loaded throttle mechanism has been removed, altered or tampered with so as to interfere with the return-to-idle system;
- f. To chase or harass wildlife;
- g. Through emergent or floating vegetation at other than

slow or no-wake speed;

- h. In a manner that unreasonably or unnecessarily endangers life, limb or property, including weaving through congested watercraft traffic, jumping the wake of another watercraft within 100 feet of the other watercraft; or
- i. In any other manner that is not reasonable and prudent.

WATER-SKIING, BAREFOOT SKIING AND SURFBOARDS

An individual may not operate a vessel on any waters of this state towing an individual engaged in barefoot skiing, on water skis, surfboard, or similar device unless there is another individual in the towing vessel observing any individual being towed or the vessel is equipped with a mirror at least 78 square inches (198.12 square centimeters) which provides the operator an unobstructed field of vision to the rear (personal watercraft see page 16, C). However, this subsection shall not apply to members of any organization regularly staging water ski shows, tournaments or exhibitions while engaged in the performance of such shows, tournaments or exhibitions.

No person may operate a vessel on any waters of this state towing a person or persons engaged in barefoot skiing or on water skis, surfboard or similar device, nor may any person engage in water-skiing, surfboarding or similar activity at any time between the hours from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise.

Exemptions are granted to performers engaged in a professional exhibition as authorized under a permit.

An individual may not engage in barefoot skiing or manipulate any water skis, surfboard, or similar device without wearing a life preserver approved by the department, unless the individual is:

- a. 16 years of age or older and engaged in windsurfing or boardsailing; or
- b. Engaging or attempting to engage in barefoot skiing or surfing and the individual is wearing a wet suit specifically designed for barefoot skiing or surfing which is in good and serviceable condition and of appropriate size.

An individual engaging or attempting to engage in barefoot skiing or surfing under subdivision b, must have on board the towing vessel a life preserver approved by the department.

No person may operate or manipulate any vessel, tow rope or other device by which the direction or location of water skis, surfboard or similar device may be affected or controlled in such a way as to cause the water skis, surfboard or similar device, or any person thereon, to collide with or strike against any object or person.

NONMOTORIZED WATERCRAFT AND PADDLECRAFT

Nonmotorized watercraft (no motor aboard) must have a Coast Guard approved wearable PFD for each person as well as whistle on board. This includes pedal boats, paddle boards, canoes, etc.

Nonmotorized watercraft operating between sunset and sunrise shall have a readily accessible white light source which shall be temporarily exhibited in sufficient time to prevent a collision, and when at anchor between sunset and sunrise must display a white light visible to a boat approaching from any direction.



PADDLE SPORTS SAFETY

Paddling on North Dakota waters should be safe and enjoyable. However, according to statistics, paddlers in small crafts, such as canoes, kayaks, paddle boards, and rafts, are more than twice as likely to drown as those operating other types of vessels.

Paddlers are boaters. They must adhere to the same laws as operators of any other type of vessel and should follow the same safety practices.

BEFORE YOU GO

- Let someone know where you are going, the route you are taking and approximately how long it will take you.
- Plan for an early take out point in case of an emergency.
- Always check the weather conditions.
- Carry a first aid kit, sunscreen, and a cell phone, along with some food and water.
- Wear bright colors, carry a life jacket (PFD) and a whistle on board.

WHEN ON THE WATER

- Always wear a life jacket (PFD).
- Avoid paddling alone.
- Don't paddle if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or combination thereof.
- Read the water conditions and monitor for obstructions and other boating traffic ahead of you.
- Respect private property.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Never litter, always pack out your trash.



BOATS FOR HIRE

Owners of boats for hire must comply with the registration and equipment regulations except that the certificate of number for vessels less than 26 feet in length, leased or rented for less than 24 hours may be retained on shore at the place of rental, but the rental agreement must be carried in the vessel.

BOAT CAPACITY

No boat may be loaded over capacity. Consult the capacity plate on the boat, if one exists, and do not exceed either the stated maximum weight or the maximum number of people. If there is no capacity plate use the following formula to determine the maximum number of persons you can safely carry in calm weather:

$(\text{Length of Boat} \times \text{Width}) = \text{People}$

15



New labels for U.S. Coast Guard Approved PFDs

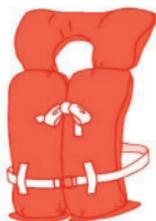
Wearable PFD – A PFD that is intended to be worn or attached to the body.

Throwable PFD – A PFD that is intended to be thrown to a person in the water.

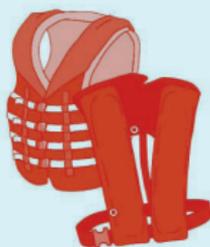
U.S. COAST GUARD APPROVED PFDs



A Type I PFD is an approved device designed to turn an unconscious person in the water from a face downward position to a vertical or slightly backward position.



A Type II PFD is an approved device designed to turn an unconscious person in the water from a face downward position to a vertical or slightly backward position.



A Type III PFD is an approved device designed to keep a conscious person in a vertical or slightly backward position.



A Type IV PFD is an approved device designed to be thrown to a person in the water and not worn.



Special Use PFD or **A Type V PFD**, to be acceptable, must be used in accordance with its label.

PROHIBITED OPERATION

No person may operate any motorboat or vessel, or manipulate any water-skis, surfboard or similar device in a reckless or negligent manner so as to endanger the life, limb or property of any person. Reckless or negligent operation of a motorboat or vessel includes weaving through congested motorboat or vessel traffic, jumping the wake of another motorboat or vessel within 100 feet of the motorboat or vessel, or in any other manner that is not reasonable or prudent.

No person may operate any motorboat or vessel, or manipulate any water-skis, surfboard or similar device while intoxicated or under the influence of any narcotic drug, barbiturate or marijuana.

No person may operate a motorboat or vessel within 100 feet of a person fishing from a shoreline, swimmer, swimming/diving raft, or an occupied, anchored or nonmotorized vessel, or within 250 feet of a reduced speed or slow or no-wake sign at greater than slow or no-wake speed.

For purposes of this provision, reckless or negligent operation includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Use of excessive speed during periods of reduced visibility while in close proximity of other vessels, while in narrow, winding channels, or near docks or marinas.
2. Operating in an overloaded condition.
3. Operating within swimming areas designated by markers or by the presence of swimmers.
4. Operating near dams and other hazardous waters.
5. Operating in such a manner as to cause a dangerous or damaging wake.
6. Towing water skiers near other vessels or obstructions, into other hazardous areas, or into swimming areas designated by markers or by the presence of swimmers.
7. Operation in such a manner as to molest or annoy persons lawfully engaged in fishing.

- Continued use or refusal to terminate use of a boat after being ordered to correct an especially hazardous condition by a law enforcement officer.

REGULATION OF NOISE FROM BOATS

A boat operated on the waters of this state between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. may not produce a noise in excess of 88 decibels for more than 10 minutes.

The decibel level of a boat must be measured from the shoreline closest to the location from which a complainant or other individual noticed the noise.

BOATING UNDER INFLUENCE

INTOXICATION TESTING OF BOAT OPERATORS

Game wardens or law enforcement officers who have probable cause that a motorboat operator is under the influence of intoxicating liquor, drugs or a combination thereof, may require the operator to take a test to determine his/her sobriety.

The motorboat or vessel must be operated, in motion, en route but not aground or at anchor.

If the operator has an alcohol, drug or combination thereof, concentration of .10 or over, or the operator refuses to submit to testing, his/her operator privileges may be revoked in addition to other penalties.

The law does not prohibit people of legal drinking age from consuming alcoholic beverages or possessing open containers in a boat.

TERMINATION OF UNSAFE USE

Any law enforcement officer who observes a vessel being used without sufficient lifesaving or fire fighting devices or in an overloaded or other unsafe condition as defined in Department regulations and in his or her judgment such use creates an especially hazardous condition, may direct the operator to take whatever immediate and reasonable steps would be necessary for the safety of those aboard the vessel, including directing the operator to return to mooring and to remain there until the situation creating the hazard is corrected or ended. For the purpose of this provision, an unsafe condition includes, but is not limited to the following:



1. Operating without required boat safety equipment.
2. Operating in an overloaded condition.
3. Fuel leakage or presence of fuel in the bilges.
4. Riding on the bow, gunwales, transom, or on the backs of seats without taking precautions sufficient to prevent falls overboard.
5. Operating a boat in a state of gross disrepair, rendering it in unseaworthy condition.
6. Operating in weather or water conditions which endanger the boat and its occupants.

CARBON MONOXIDE

⚠ DANGER	
An illustration of a person on a boat. The person is surrounded by bubbles labeled "CO". The boat is shown in silhouette on the water.	<p>Carbon monoxide (CO) can cause brain damage or death.</p> <p>Engine and generator exhaust contains odorless and colorless carbon monoxide gas.</p> <p>Carbon monoxide will be around the back of the boat when engines or generators are running.</p> <p>Move to fresh air, if you feel nausea, headache, dizziness, or drowsiness.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">NW-208-05</p>

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas that can be toxic even in very small quantities since its effects are cumulative over time. Whether inside, outside, underway or anchored, passengers of many types of boats with a motor can quickly become victims of CO poisoning.

HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia, the loss of body heat to the water, is probably the greatest cause of water-related deaths. Often the cause of death is listed as drowning; but, most often the primary cause is hypothermia and the secondary cause is drowning. After an individual has succumbed to hypothermia, he/she will lose consciousness and then drown. The following chart shows the effects of hypothermia:

Water Temperature (degrees F.)	Exhaustion or Unconsciousness	Expected Time of Survival
32.5	Under 15 minutes	Under 15 to 45 minutes
32.5 to 40	15 to 30 minutes	30 to 90 minutes
40 to 50	30 to 60 minutes	1 to 3 hours
50 to 60	1 to 2 hours	1 to 6 hours
60 to 70	2 to 7 hours	2 to 40 hours
70 to 80	3 to 12 hours	3 hours to indefinitely
Over 80	Indefinitely	Indefinitely

PFDs can increase survival time because of the insulation they provide. Naturally, the warmer the water, the less insulation one will require. When operating in cold waters (below 40° F) consideration should be given to using a coat or jacket-style PFD as they cover more of the body than the vest-style PFDs.

DIVER FLAGS

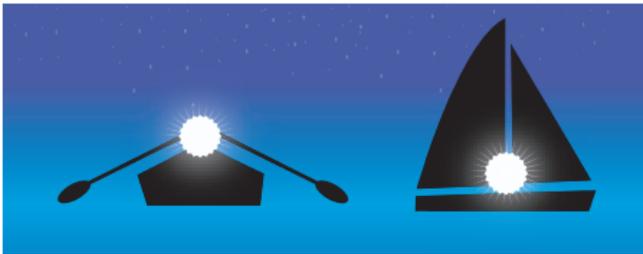
A diver flag must be displayed on a float or buoy during any diving or spearfishing. Operators of boats must exercise caution when near a diver flag.



LIGHTING

LIGHTS WHEN ANCHORED OR OPERATING NONPOWERED BOATS

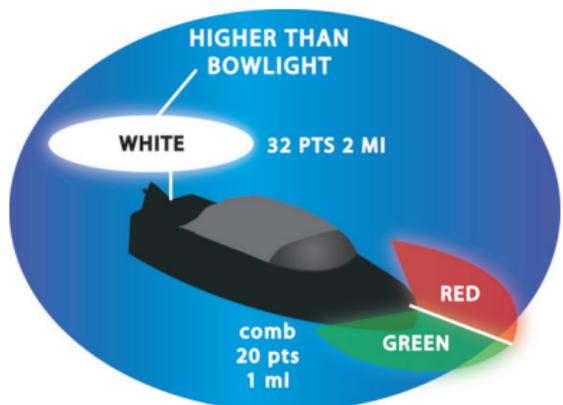
Power boats under 65 feet and all sailing vessels at anchor must display anchor lights except in "special anchorage areas." An anchor light is a white light visible to a boat approaching from any direction, and is displayed in the fore part of the vessel.



All nonpowered boats operating between sunset and sunrise shall have a readily accessible white light source which shall be temporarily exhibited in sufficient time to prevent a collision.

LESS THAN 26 FEET

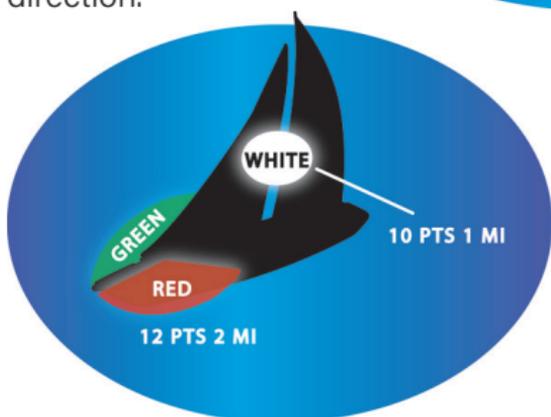
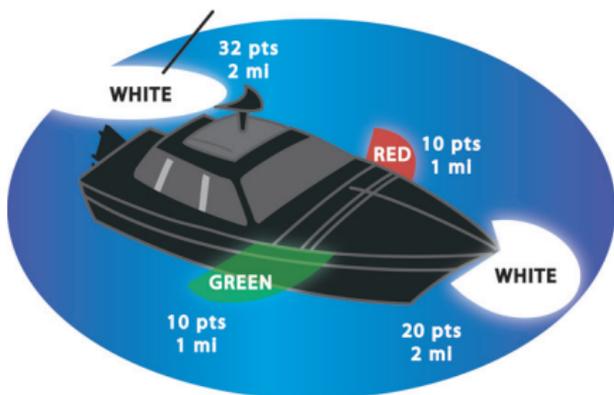
Motorboats operating between sunset and sunrise shall exhibit a 20-point (225 degree) combination red and green bow light, visible for 1 mile, the left side being red, the right side being green,



and 32-point (360 degree) white stern light visible for two miles, placed higher than the bow light and unobstructed by occupants or portions of the vessel. In addition, all vessels at anchor between sunset and sunrise must display a white anchor light visible to a boat approaching from any direction.

26 FEET TO NOT MORE THAN 65 FEET

Motorboats operating between sunset and sunrise shall exhibit a 20-point (225 degree) white bow light visible for two miles, a red 10-point (112 1/2 degree) side light on the left side and a green, 10 point (112 1/2 degree) side light on the right side, both visible for 1 mile (the arc of visibility of the side lights must begin parallel to the center-line of the vessel and extend 10 points toward the stern) and a 32-point (360 degree) white stern light visible for 2 miles, placed higher than the bowlight and unobstructed by occupants or portions of the vessel. In addition all vessels at anchor between sunset and sunrise must display a white anchor light visible to a boat approaching from any direction.



IMPORTANT

Stern lights must be placed high enough that their light will not be blocked by persons or parts of the boat or its equipment.

BUOYS

Placement of Regulatory Signs, Markers, Buoys and Other Warning or Marking Devices

Upon written approval of the Game and Fish director, regulatory signs, markers, buoys or other warning or marking devices may be placed near or in the waters of this state as may be necessary for safety or recreation.

SANITATION DEVICES

If a vessel is equipped with a marine toilet or other similar device for the disposition of sewage or other wastes, only that type of marine toilet equipped with a treatment device meeting standards established by the state water pollution control board. The board shall furnish a list of the types of treatment devices currently available and considered acceptable for use with marine toilets under this subsection. No person owning or operating a vessel upon the waters of this state may use, operate or permit the use or operation of any marine toilet or similar device unless it is approved under this subsection. No person may discharge into the waters of this state, directly or indirectly from a vessel, any untreated sewage or other waste. No container of untreated sewage or other wastes may be placed, left, discharged or caused to be placed, left, or discharged in or near any waters of this state from a vessel in such a manner or quantity as to create a nuisance or health hazard, or pollute such waters.

No person may operate or give permission for the operation of a vessel which is not equipped as required by this section or modification thereof.

REGATTAS, RACES, MARINE PARADES, TOURNAMENTS OR EXHIBITIONS

The Department may authorize the holding of regattas, motorboat, or other boat races, marine parades, tournaments or exhibitions on any waters of this state. Whenever a regatta, motorboat, or other boat race, marine parade, tournaments or exhibition is proposed to be held, the person in charge thereof, shall, at least 10 days prior thereto, file an application with the Department for permission to hold the same, and it shall not be conducted without authorization of the Department in writing.



OUTBOARD MOTOR SERIAL NUMBERS

No outboard motor manufactured after Jan. 1, 1980, shall be sold or offered for commercial sale by a dealer in this state unless the motor has permanently engraved thereon by the manufacturer an identifying serial number. The serial mark shall be of a permanent nature so as to prevent or discourage the removal, defacing, alteration or destruction thereof.

No person may possess, repair, or sell an outboard motor, acquired after Jan. 1, 1980, from which the serial number has been removed.

On boats with outboard motors, the boat's capacity plate will display the recommended maximum horsepower rating for the boat. This should never be exceeded as the hp rat-

ing has been tested to USCG and marine safety standards. Exceeding the HP rating could cause the boat to swamp, capsize, make operating difficult to control and may also void any warranty or insurance claims.

BOAT MOTOR RESTRICTIONS

Some North Dakota lakes have watercraft restrictions such as "Idle Speed Only" or "Electric Motors Only." Idle Speed Only is defined as operating a boat at the slowest possible speed necessary to maintain steerage (i.e., trolling – with no wake).

Electric Motors Only (Note: Boats may be propelled manually or with an electric motor. No combustion motor may be operated on these waters): Casselton Reservoir, Davis Dam, Dickinson Dike, Heinrich-Martin Dam, J. Clark Salyer, Kettle Lake, Larimore Dam, Leland Dam, Lightning Lake, McDowell Dam, Mooreton Pond, Sather Dam, Spring Lake Park Ponds and Strawberry Lake (Turtle Mountains).

Idle Speed Only: Arroda Lakes, Arrowwood Lake Wildlife Refuge, Lake Audubon (north arm), Baukol-Noonan Dam, Baukol-Noonan East Mine Pond, Belfield Pond, Boundary Lake, Brewer Lake, Camels Hump Dam, Carbury Dam, Clausen Springs Lake, Coal Mine Lake, Crown Butte, Davis WPA, Dion Lake, Epping-Springbrook Dam, Fish Creek Dam, Fordville Dam, Gravel Lake, Harmon Lake, Harmony Lake, Heart Butte (Lake Tschida) – designated areas only, Hooker Lake, Lake Ilo, Indian Creek Dam, Jensen Lake, Jim Lake Wildlife Refuge, Kota-Ray Dam, Kraft Slough, Long Lake Wildlife Refuge, McClusky Canal proper, McGregor Dam, Mirror Lake, North Golden Lake, Pelican Lake, Raleigh Reservoir, Sheep Creek Dam, South Carlson Lake, Sweet Briar Dam, and along the Missouri River at the mouths of the Heart River, Lakewood, Marina Bay, Misty Waters and Square Butte Creek.

OUT-OF-STATE OPERATION

Boating laws and regulations vary from state to state. If you are planning on taking your boat to another state, determine what the boating and trailer regulations are in the state where you plan on boating, and prepare yourself, boat, and trailer to abide by them, and avoid a costly fine or delay.



Funding for this Boat and Water Safety Guide
is cost shared through a grant administered
by the U.S. Coast Guard



The NDGFD receives Federal financial assistance from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Coast Guard. In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the NDGFD joins the US Department of the Interior and its Bureaus and the US Department of Homeland Security in prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex (in education programs or activities) and also religion. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or you desire further information, please write to: ND Game and Fish Department, Attn: Chief of Administrative Services, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095 or to: Office of Civil Rights, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240. The TTY/TDD (Relay ND) number for the hearing or speech impaired is 1-800-366-6888.