

ARIZONA BOATING LAWS AND REGULATIONS

— AT A GLANCE —



The information in this pamphlet is abbreviated from Arizona state law and Arizona Game and Fish Commission regulations. It is designed to provide a quick reference to boating rules. Information for motorboat restrictions on certain lakes is available from hunting and fishing license dealers as part of the current fishing regulations.

Information on boating and the Arizona Game and Fish Department boating class schedule can be found on our Web site, azgfd.gov, or by calling (602) 789-3235.

DEFINITIONS

- *Person* means any individual or group of individuals.
- *Watercraft* means any boat designed to be propelled on water by machinery, oars, paddles, or wind action upon a sail.



- *Waterway* means any body of water on which a watercraft can be navigated.

- *Wakeless speed* means a speed that does not create a wake, and is no more than 5 mph.

- *Motorized watercraft* means any watercraft that is propelled by machinery whether or not the machinery is the principal source of propulsion.
- *Aids to navigation* means buoys, beacons, or other fixed objects designed to direct navigation.
- *Regulatory marker* means any anchored or fixed marker on or near the water, other than aids to navigation, including markers to indicate swimming areas, speed zones, danger points, wakeless areas, keep-out areas, mooring buoys and general information.
- *Underway* means that a watercraft on public waters is not at anchor, is not made fast to the shore, or is not aground.
- *Wear* means to be worn and fastened according to the manufacturer's design or recommended use and adjusted for a snug fit.

APPLICATION

These provisions apply on all waterways of the state, including those common to interstate boundaries. On waters common with other states, such as the Colorado River, other states' laws and federal regulations may also apply.

WATERCRAFT REGISTRATION

Staggered registration is similar to motor vehicle registration. Decals issued will be the color of the year of expiration and will display the month and year of expiration.



If ownership of a watercraft changes, the new owner must notify the Arizona Game and Fish Department within 15 days. A boat owner must also notify the department within 15 days with an address change or if a watercraft is stolen.

No number other than the one issued by the department may be displayed on the forward half of any watercraft.

The certificate of number must be aboard when a watercraft is in use.

If a certificate of number is lost or destroyed, a duplicate may be obtained from the department for a \$2 charge.

All undocumented motorized watercraft operated, moored or anchored on the waterways of Arizona must be numbered. The owner must file an application for number with the Arizona Game and Fish Department on forms provided. The number issued must be displayed on each side of the bow along with the current registration decal issued by the department.

Dealer numbers

Dealers or manufacturers may use numbers and decals attached to removable signs.

Numbering exceptions

Exceptions to registration requirements include watercraft used solely as lifeboats and those documented by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Reciprocity

Nonresident-owned watercraft currently registered in another state may be operated on the waters of Arizona for a period of up to 90 days.

Watercraft tax and registration fee

An annual registration fee of \$4 for residents is required for each motorized watercraft. Watercraft will also be taxed on the basis of length: 45 cents per foot up to and including 18 feet and 68 cents per foot beyond 18 feet. A \$20 fee for nonresidents is required for each watercraft. Taxes are \$2.90 per foot up to and including 18 feet and \$5.50 per foot over 18 feet. If you want the latest information on watercraft fees, contact any Arizona Game and Fish Department office or call (602) 942-3000.

Trailer registration

Check with the Arizona Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicle Division for boat trailer registration.

EQUIPMENT

Personal flotation devices

All watercraft must be equipped with U.S. Coast Guard approved flotation devices as follows:



All watercraft, except sailboards and certain racing shells or rowing sculls, must have at least one U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD), type I, II, III, or V, for each person on board. Such devices

must be in good and serviceable condition, readily accessible and must fit the intended wearer.

All watercraft 16 feet and longer shall have one type IV throwable PFD on board.

When operating a personal watercraft, all persons on board shall wear a type I, II, or III PFD.

All children 12 years and younger shall wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved type I, II, or III PFD while underway on any vessel.

Any person being towed behind a watercraft shall wear a buoyant belt or personal flotation device.

Note: A buoyant belt is not a U.S. Coast Guard approved flotation device.

Fire extinguishers

All watercraft smaller than 26 feet and using any volatile liquid having a flashpoint of 110 degrees or less for fuel shall have on board and readily accessible at least one U.S. Coast Guard approved type B-I fire extinguisher if any 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 completely filled with flotation materials
- Closed living spaces
- Closed stowage compartments in which combustible or flammable materials are stored
- Permanently installed fuel tanks (fuel tanks secured so they cannot be moved in case of fire or other emergency shall be considered permanently installed)
- A fixed fire extinguishing system installed in the engine compartment

All watercraft 26–40 feet long shall have on board and readily accessible:

- At least two type B-I fire extinguishers or at least one type B-II fire extinguisher or
- At least one type B-I fire extinguisher if a fixed fire extinguishing system is installed in the engine compartment

Watercraft 40–65 feet must carry at least three U.S. Coast Guard approved type B-I fire extinguishers or at least one B-I and one B-II fire extinguisher. If a fixed fire extinguisher system is installed in the engine compartment, there must be at least two type B-I or at least one type B-II fire extinguisher on board and readily accessible.

OPERATION

Reckless operation

A person shall not operate a watercraft while allowing a person to ride on the gunwales, transom, or the decked-over bow of a watercraft propelled by machinery operating in excess of wakeless speed.

No person shall operate a watercraft in such a manner as to show willful or wanton disregard for other persons or property.

Operation age

Except in case of emergency, no person under the age of 12 years may operate a watercraft propelled by a motor of greater than eight horsepower, unless the person's parent or legal guardian or at least one person who is 18 years or older is present on the watercraft. Jet powered personal watercraft (PWC) are over the eight horsepower limit.

Speed restrictions

No person shall operate a watercraft at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under prevailing conditions or in excess of posted limit. Speed shall be controlled to avoid collision or creating dangerous wake.

Operation under the influence

No person under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs shall be in physical control of any watercraft. The legal level of intoxication is .08 blood alcohol concentration (BAC). Extreme OUI is .15 BAC and above. A person found guilty of an OUI violation could receive a fine of up to \$2,500 and a jail sentence of up to six months. Subsequent convictions and aggravated OUI may carry even more severe penalties.



Lights

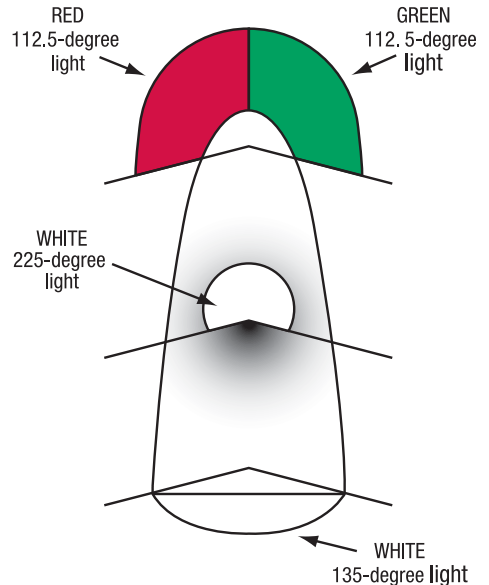
Either inland or international rules for lights must be observed between sunset and sunrise when underway or adrift.

Inland rules for lights on motorboats less than 26 feet prescribe a red and green combination light forward and a bright white light aft to show all around the horizon (360 degrees). Motorboats 26–65 feet

The stern running light is a white 360-degree light and is not to be obstructed by any objects on the craft.



If your craft is smaller than 40 feet, you may display lights as shown below:



By splitting the stern light in this manner, the glare in the cockpit will be greatly reduced.

shall display a 225-degree (112.5-degrees on each side of the watercraft) unbroken white light above and forward of the stern light along the center line of the watercraft. The stern light shall display a 135-degree unbroken white light placed as near to the stern as practicable. Separate sidelights showing red 112.5 degrees to port (left) and green 112.5 degrees to starboard (right) shall be used and fitted with screens to prevent them from being seen across the bow.

International rules for lights on motorboats smaller than 40 feet prescribe a red and green combination light or separate red and green lights forward, a white 225-degree light forward and 3 feet higher than the colored lights, and a white 135-degree light aft.



All sailboats without an auxiliary engine on board shall display separate red and green lights forward and a white 135-degree light aft.

Manually propelled watercraft shall carry a lantern or flashlight showing a light that shall be exhibited in sufficient time to avert

collision. Lights are not necessary on waters where power craft are prohibited.

A white 360-degree light must be displayed from sunset to sunrise any time a watercraft is anchored other than in a special anchorage area.

Diver flags

A red flag with a single white diagonal stripe, running from staffhead to opposite lower corner, shall be recognized as a diver down flag, indicating there are divers below the surface.

Muffling devices

All watercraft must be equipped with effective muffling equipment in good working order. Unless operating under a special permit, no person shall operate a watercraft that emits a sound level in excess of 86 decibels on the “A” weighted scale as measured 50 feet or more from the watercraft.

Overloading

All watercraft 20 feet or smaller in length sold or manufactured in Arizona after January 1, 1971, must have a capacity plate attached and readily visible from the position normally occupied by the operator of the watercraft. No watercraft may be loaded beyond the safe carrying capacity indicated on this plate. Such plates are not required on canoes and sailboats.

Watercraft and boat engine restrictions

Motorized watercraft on the following waters are restricted to using an electric motor only:

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

Motorized watercraft on the following waters are restricted to a single electric motor or a single gasoline engine not exceeding 10 horsepower:

Ashurst Lake	Little Mormon Lake
Becker Lake	Luna Lake
Big Lake	Mexican Hay Lake
Blue Ridge Reservoir	Nelson Reservoir
Cataract Lake	Parker Canyon Lake
Chevelon Canyon Lake	Rainbow Lake
Cholla Lake Hot Pond	River Reservoir
Concho Lake	Show Low Lake
Crescent Lake	Whipple Lake
Fool Hollow Lake	White Mountain Lake
Kaibab Lake	(in Apache County)
Kinnikinick Lake	Willow Springs Lake

Watercraft are prohibited on Frye Mesa Reservoir, Rose Canyon Lake and Snow Flat Lake.

Watercraft are prohibited from entering the following waters during the dates designated:

1. The posted portion of Luna Lake from April 1–July 31.
2. The posted portions of Alamo Lake from Dec. 1—the end of waterfowl season.
3. The posted portion of the Tonto arm of Roosevelt Lake from Nov. 15–Feb. 28.

4. The posted portions of Mittry Lake from Nov. 15–Feb. 28.
5. The posted portions of Becker Lake from April 1–July 31.
6. The posted portions of the Aqua Fria arm of Lake Pleasant from mid-December to mid-June.

Motor restrictions do not apply to boats of governmental agencies while on official duty or to emergency standby boats operated by lake concessionaires when approved by the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

BOATING TIPS

- Be courteous. The less time you spend on the boat ramp or dock, the more boaters will appreciate you. In most cases, the larger the boat, the longer it takes to launch and retrieve. Sailboats are particularly difficult to retrieve.
- The skipper or operator of a watercraft is responsible for any damage caused by the boat's wake.
- Keep a lookout for other watercraft, skiers, reefs, snags and other floating objects.
- Make water your beverage of choice. Arizona watercraft law enforcement agencies have adopted a zero-tolerance policy for boating while intoxicated.
- Reduce your wake especially in the area of swimmers, fishermen, sailboat regattas or watercraft at anchor.

WATERWAY MARKING SYSTEM

Regulatory markers and aids to navigation

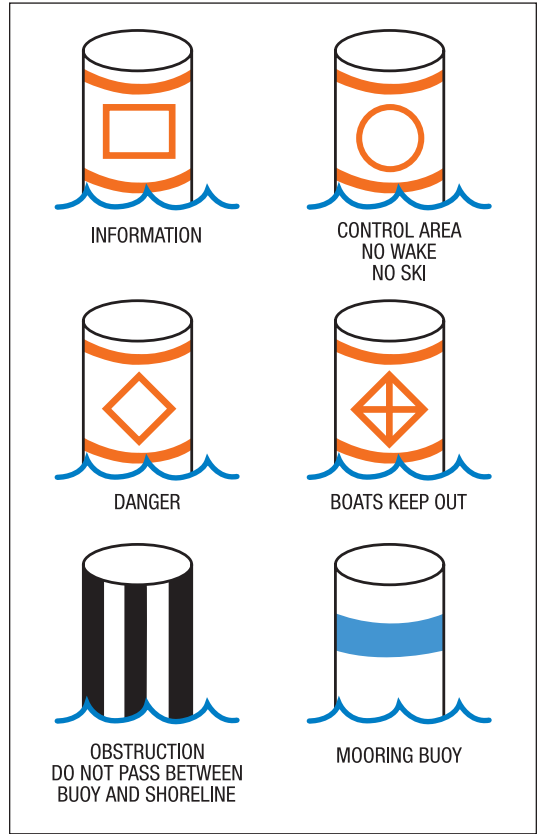
No person shall operate a watercraft on the waters of the state contrary to the manner prescribed by lawful regulatory markers.

No person shall moor or fasten a watercraft to any regulatory marker, or remove, obstruct, or interfere with any regulatory marker.

All regulatory markers are colored white and orange.

Geometric shapes painted on regulatory markers shall indicate:

1. A diamond means danger.
2. A diamond with a cross inside means no boats allowed.
3. Circles mean boats are subject to restrictions indicated inside the circle.



4. A square or rectangular shape with directions inside gives specific directions, such as “marina.”

On a well-defined channel, aids to navigation shall be solid colored buoys unless otherwise marked. A buoy marking the left side of a channel (looking upstream or up lake away from the dam) shall be green. Buoys marking the right side of the channel shall be all red. Such buoys shall be in pairs, marking each side of the channel, except that on an irregularly defined channel they may be staggered on alternate sides of the channel. In all cases, watercraft should pass between the buoys.

A buoy with alternate black and white stripes means the watercraft should not pass between the buoy and the shore.

Navigational markers may be equipped with flashing lights.

Mooring buoys shall be white with a horizontal blue

band halfway between the top of the buoy and the water line.

Interference with navigation

No person shall operate a watercraft or swim in a manner that unnecessarily or unreasonably interferes with other watercraft or within areas used for launching. Anchoring or swimming in heavily traveled channels or blocking launching areas shall constitute such interference.

Waterskiing

No watercraft having in tow a person or persons on waterskis, surfboard or similar contrivance shall be operated unless the watercraft is occupied by at least two persons: an operator and an observer.

The observer shall display a bright or brilliant orange or red flag visible from all directions, no less than 12 x 12 inches on a side and mounted on a handle, at all times when the skier is down in the water and not actually skiing. The observer must be physically capable and mentally competent to act as an observer.

No person shall be on waterskis or similar contrivances in a careless or reckless manner so as to endanger life or property, or in a manner contrary to that designated by regulatory markers.

Waterskiing is prohibited between sunset and sunrise.

Blocking launching areas

No person shall camp or park on any boat-launching area or otherwise restrict or prevent free access to the launching area.

Dumping refuse, littering

It is illegal to dump refuse, rubbish or garbage on the waterways or shorelines of this state. Watercraft sewage systems that dump directly into the water must be sealed. Discharge of any sewage system into waterways or onto shorelines is illegal.

Accident: duties of operator

The operator of any watercraft involved in an accident that results in injury or property damage shall immediately stop such watercraft, give his name and address and the name and address of the owner to the injured party, render reasonable assistance and promptly report the incident to the nearest law enforcement agency. A report must be

filed directly to the Arizona Game and Fish Department within 48 hours if the accident resulted in a death. If it resulted in any injury beyond first aid or property damage of more than \$500 then the report must be filed to the department within five days. Reports should be sent to: Arizona Game and Fish Department, Boating Law Administrator, 2221 W. Greenway Road, Phoenix, AZ, 85023.

Enforcement

All peace officers of the state, counties, and cities shall enforce the provisions of Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 5.

In the enforcement of Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 5, an officer may issue a warning order or a citation, and order the operator of the watercraft ashore to correct the violation.

All watercraft operators are required to stop when hailed by a peace officer.



Carbon monoxide poisoning

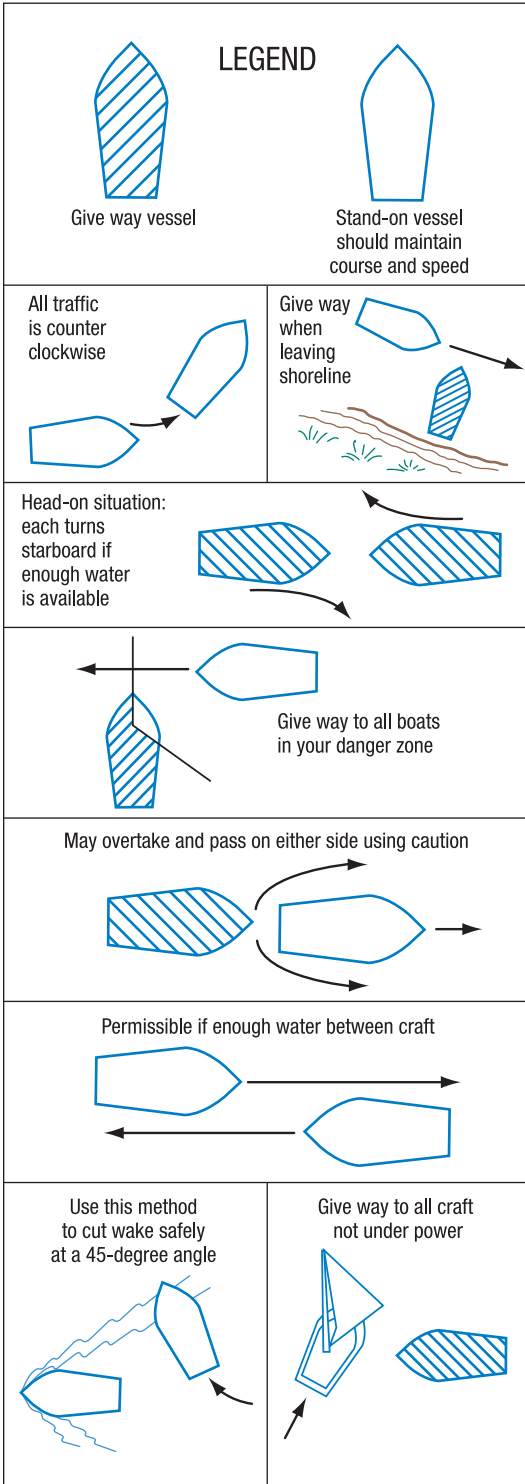
When operating any type of watercraft, be careful when running downwind (the wind blowing toward the bow), as exhaust gases may blow back onboard. The best prevention of carbon monoxide poisoning is knowledge about carbon monoxide. Everyone should know the symptoms of, and treatment for, carbon monoxide poisoning.

Personal watercraft (PWC)

Personal watercraft means a watercraft that is smaller than 16 feet, propelled by machinery powering a water jet pump, and designed to be operated by a person who sits, stands or kneels on rather than sitting inside the watercraft.



When operating a personal watercraft, all persons on board shall wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved type I, II, or III personal flotation device. PFDs must be worn and fastened according to the manufacturer's design or recommended use and be adjusted for a snug fit. If the craft has a lanyard type cutoff switch, it must be attached to the operator.



A PWC shall not be loaded beyond its safe carrying capacity or the manufacturer's recommended limits.

When operating a personal watercraft you must not act in a reckless or negligent manner endangering the life or property of another person. In Arizona, simultaneously committing two or more of the following acts is considered reckless operation:

- Operating a personal watercraft within 60 feet of another watercraft above wakeless speed.
- Operating a personal watercraft within the vicinity of a motorboat in a manner that obstructs the visibility of either operator.
- Heading into the wake of a motorboat that is within 60 feet and causing one-half or more of the length of the personal watercraft to leave the water.
- Maneuvering quickly, turning sharply or swerving unless the maneuver is necessary to avoid a collision within 60 feet of another watercraft.

Navigation rules

The operator of a watercraft under power shall give way to any craft not under power, unless the craft not under power is overtaking the powered craft.

The operator of a watercraft shall give way to watercraft entering its danger zone, which is an area from straight ahead to 112.5 degrees to starboard side, in cases where a collision might occur. This is roughly the same angle as the green or starboard side running lights.

A watercraft may pass on either side when overtaking another, but the operator of the passing watercraft shall be responsible for any collision and for his wake. The passing watercraft is the give way vessel. Watercraft being overtaken shall maintain course and speed.

Watercraft meeting head to head shall pass portside to portside by turning starboard when it is practical to do so.

Normal traffic on waterways shall be counterclockwise. Watercraft leaving the shoreline shall give way to watercraft approaching the shoreline.

Take a boating safety class
(602) 789-3235



azgfd.gov

Arizona Game and Fish Department
2221 W. Greenway Road
Phoenix, AZ 85023
(602) 942-3000

The Arizona Game and Fish Department prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its programs and activities. If anyone believes that they have been discriminated against in any of the AGFD's programs or activities, including employment practices, they may file a complaint with the Deputy Director, 2221 W. Greenway Road, Phoenix, AZ 85023, (602) 789-3290, or with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Ste. 130, Arlington, VA 22203. Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation or this document in an alternative format by contacting the Deputy Director as listed above.