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THE HANDBOOK OF INDIANA BOATING LAWS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



2024 Edition

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THE HANDBOOK of **INDIANA BOATING LAWS** and **RESPONSIBILITIES**



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Indiana and federal boating laws are presented in this handbook in a summarized form. Indiana laws in their entirety can be found in the Indiana Code (IC), Indiana Administrative Code (IAC), and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). These laws are subject to change. It is the responsibility of the operator to be aware of the most current laws when using a boat.

When regulations refer to
“Waters of Concurrent Jurisdiction,” it means
 Lake Michigan (Indiana portion), the Great Miami River,
 the Ohio River, and the portion of the Wabash River that
 forms a border between Indiana and Illinois.

Stay up to Date on New Boating Laws...

Visit the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website at www.in.gov/dnr.

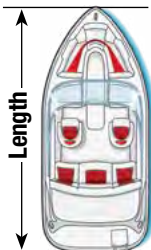
Before Going Out

Before going out on the water, take steps to make the outing safe and enjoyable.

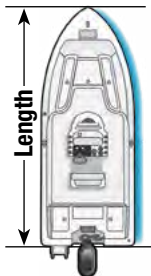
Vessel Length Classes

- A vessel's length class determines the equipment necessary to comply with federal and state laws.
- Vessels are divided into length classes:
 - Less than 16 feet
 - 16 feet to less than 26 feet
 - 26 feet to less than 40 feet
 - 40 feet to less than 65 feet
- Length is measured from the tip of the bow in a straight line to the stern. This does not include outboard motors, brackets, rudders, bow attachments, or swim platforms and ladders that are not a molded part of the hull.

Inboards



Outboards



Vessel Capacity

- Always check the capacity plate, which is usually found near the operator's position or on the vessel's transom. This plate indicates the maximum weight capacity and maximum number of people that the vessel can carry safely.
- Personal watercraft (PWC) and some other vessels are not required to have a capacity plate. Always follow the recommended capacity in the owner's manual and on the manufacturer's warning decal.

Fueling a Vessel

Never fuel at night unless it is an emergency. If you must refuel after dark, use only electric lights. Try to refuel away from the water or on a commercial fueling ramp.

- **Before beginning to fuel:**
 - Dock the boat securely and ask all passengers to exit.
 - Do not allow anyone to smoke or strike a match.

- Check all fuel lines, connections, and fuel vents.
- Turn off anything that might cause a spark—engines, fans, or electrical equipment.
- Shut off all fuel valves and extinguish all open flames, such as galley stoves and pilot lights.
- Close all windows, ports, doors, and other openings to prevent fumes from entering the boat.
- Remove portable fuel tanks and fill them on the dock.

■ **While filling the fuel tank:**

- Keep the nozzle of the fuel-pump hose in contact with the tank opening to prevent producing a static spark.
- Avoid spilling fuel into the boat's bilge or the water.
- Never fill a tank to the brim—leave room to expand.
- Wipe up any spilled fuel.

The most important safe fueling practice...

If your vessel is equipped with a power ventilation system, turn it on for at least four minutes after fueling and before starting your engine to remove gas vapors in the bilge.

■ **After fueling:**

- Open all windows, ports, doors, and other openings.
- Before starting the engine, sniff the bilge and engine compartment for fuel vapors.

Additional Safety Procedures for PWC

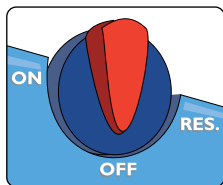
- Do not tip the PWC in order to fill it all the way up. If the tank is overfilled, the fuel may expand and spill into the water.
- After fueling, open the door of the engine compartment and sniff to check for any evidence of gas fumes. Do this before starting the engine. If you do smell gas fumes, determine the source and make repairs immediately.



Fuel Selector Switch on a PWC

This switch can help you avoid becoming stranded without fuel.

- Use the “Off” position when the PWC’s engine is turned off.
- Use the “On” position while you are underway.
- Use the “Reserve” position if you run out of fuel while underway. This will allow you to return to shore. Don’t forget to switch back to “On” after refueling.



Preventing Theft

Defend against theft of your vessel and equipment.

- Store your vessel so that it is not easily accessed.
 - Store your vessel and trailer in a locked garage or storage area.
 - Park another vehicle in front of the trailer, or lock the trailer to a fixed object in a well-lit area.
 - Secure the vessel and trailer to a fixed object with a good-quality chain and lock. If moored, secure the vessel to the dock with a steel cable and lock.
 - Remove a trailer wheel if parked for an extended time.
 - Purchase a quality trailer hitch lock and use it.
- Chain and lock the motor and fuel tanks to the vessel.
- Mark or engrave all equipment with an identifier such as your driver’s license number.
- Photograph or videotape the interior and exterior of your vessel, showing all installed equipment and additional gear and equipment. Make a complete inventory of your equipment, vessel, and trailer.
- Remove expensive electronics or other valuables if the vessel is left unattended. When parking at a boat ramp or marina, all valuables should be secured in your vehicle and out of view of the public.
- Cover your vessel and always remove the keys.
- Title and register your vessel.

Filing a Float Plan

Before going out on a vessel, it is always a good idea to leave a float plan with a relative or friend, or at least with a local marina. A float plan should:

- Describe the vessel, including its registration number, length, make, horsepower, and engine type.
- State where you are going, the detailed route, your planned departure time, and your expected return time.
- Give the name, address, and telephone number of each person on board and an emergency contact.

Pre-Departure Checklist

You can help ensure a good time while operating your vessel by performing this pre-departure check.

- ✓ Check the weather forecast for the area and time frame during which you will be boating.
- ✓ Make sure that the steering and throttle controls operate properly and all lights are working properly.
- ✓ Check for any fuel leaks from the tank, fuel lines, and carburetor.
- ✓ Check the engine compartment for oil leaks.
- ✓ Check hose connections for leaks or cracks, and make sure hose clamps are tight.
- ✓ Drain all water from the engine compartment, and be sure the bilge plug is replaced and secure.
- ✓ Check to be sure you have a fully charged engine battery and fire extinguishers.
- ✓ If so equipped, make sure the engine cut-off switch (ECOS) and wrist lanyard are in good order.
- ✓ Make sure you have the required number of personal flotation devices (PFDs), and check that they are in good condition.
- ✓ Leave a float plan with a reliable friend or relative.

On the Water

Safe navigation on Indiana waterways is everyone's responsibility. All operators are equally responsible for taking action necessary to avoid collisions.

Traffic Rules

IC 14-15-3-14

Traffic rules

Sec. 14. A person operating a boat shall observe the following traffic rules when applicable:

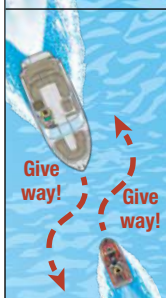
1. When two (2) boats are approaching each other "head and head", or nearly so, each boat shall bear to the right and pass the other boat on the boat's left side.
2. When two (2) boats are approaching each other obliquely or at right angles, the boat on the right has the right-of-way. However, when:
 - A. one (1) boat is under sail or is nonmotorized, the sailboat or nonmotorized boat has the right-of-way; and
 - B. two (2) boats are under sail or are nonmotorized, the boat on the right has the right-of-way.
3. A boat operated on a river or a channel shall bear to the right.
4. A boat may overtake and pass another boat on either side if the passing can be done with safety and within the assured clear distance ahead, but the boat overtaken has the right-of-way.
5. A boat leaving a dock, a pier, a wharf, or the shore has the right-of-way over all boats approaching the dock, pier, wharf, or shore.

Navigation Rules

There are two terms that help explain these rules.

- **Stand-on vessel:** The vessel that should maintain its course and speed
- **Give-way vessel:** The vessel that must take early and substantial action to avoid collision by stopping, slowing down, or changing course

Power vs. Power



Meeting Head-On

Power vs. Power: Neither vessel is the stand-on vessel. Both vessels should keep to the starboard (right).

Power vs. Sail: The powerboat is the give-way vessel. The sailboat is the stand-on vessel.



Crossing Situations

Power vs. Power: The vessel on the operator's port (left) side is the give-way vessel. The vessel on the operator's starboard (right) side is the stand-on vessel.

Power vs. Sail: The powerboat is the give-way vessel. The sailboat is the stand-on vessel.

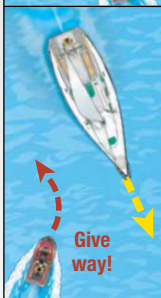
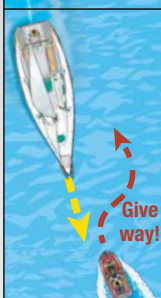


Overtaking

Power vs. Power: The vessel that is overtaking another vessel is the give-way vessel. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on vessel.

Power vs. Sail: The vessel that is overtaking another vessel is the give-way vessel. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on vessel.

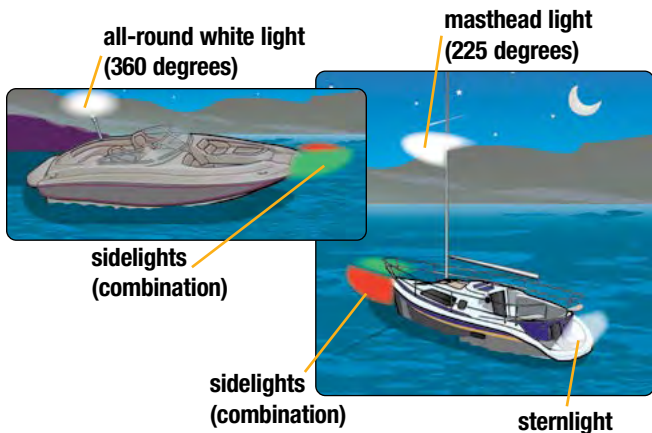
Power vs. Sail



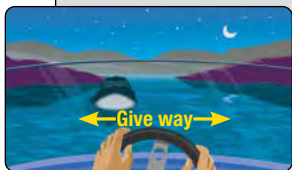
Nighttime Navigation

Be on the lookout for the lights of other vessels when boating at night. Several types of lights serve as navigational aids at night. There are four common navigation lights. (See “Navigation Lights” for state laws.)

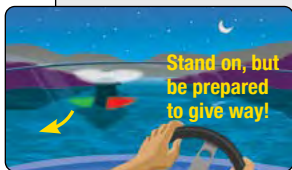
- **Sidelights:** These red and green lights are called sidelights (also called combination lights) because they are visible to another vessel approaching from the side or head-on. The red light indicates a vessel’s port (left) side; the green indicates a vessel’s starboard (right) side.
- **Sternlight:** This white light is seen from behind or nearly behind the vessel.
- **Masthead Light:** This white light shines forward and to both sides and is required on all power-driven vessels. A masthead light must be displayed by all vessels when under engine power. The absence of this light indicates a sailboat under sail.
- **All-Round White Light:** On power-driven vessels less than 39.4 feet in length, this light may be used to combine a masthead light and sternlight into a single white light that can be seen by other vessels from any direction. This light serves as an anchor light when sidelights are extinguished.



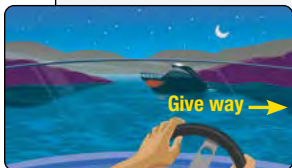
Encountering Vessels at Night



When you see only a white light, you are overtaking another vessel. It is the stand-on vessel whether it is underway or anchored. You may go around it on either side.



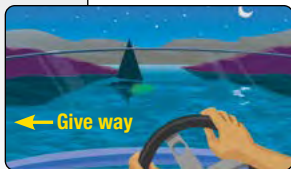
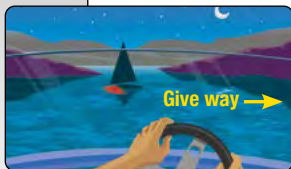
When you see a green and a white light, you are the stand-on vessel. However, remain alert in case the other vessel operator does not see you or does not know the navigation rules.



When you see a red and a white light, you must give way to the other vessel. Slow down and allow the vessel to pass, or you may turn to the right and pass behind the other vessel.

Encountering a Sailboat at Night

When you see **only a red light** or **only a green light**, you may be approaching a sailboat under sail and you must give way. The sailboat under sail is always the stand-on vessel.



U.S. Aids to Navigation System (ATON) 312 IAC 5-4

Buoys and markers are the “traffic signals” that guide vessel operators safely along some waterways. They also identify dangerous or controlled areas and give directions and information. As a recreational boat or PWC operator, you will need to know the lateral navigation markers and non-lateral markers of the U.S. Aids to Navigation System (ATON).

Lateral Markers

These navigation aids mark the edges of safe water areas; for example, directing travel within a channel. The markers use a combination of colors and numbers, which may appear on either buoys or permanently placed markers.

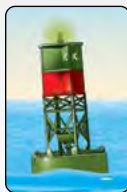
Red colors, red lights, and even numbers

indicate the right side of the channel as a boater enters from the open sea or heads upstream.



Green colors, green lights, and odd numbers indicate the left side of the channel as a boater enters from the open sea or heads upstream.

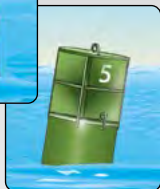
Red and green colors and/or lights indicate the preferred (primary) channel. If green is on top, the preferred channel is to the right as a boater enters from the open sea or heads upstream; if red is on top, the preferred channel is to the left.



Nuns are red cone-shaped buoys marked with even numbers.



Cans are green cylindrical-shaped buoys marked with odd numbers.



Lighted Buoys use the lateral marker colors and numbers discussed above; in addition, they have a matching colored light.



Daymarks are permanently placed signs attached to structures, such as posts, in the water. Common daymarks are red triangles (equivalent to nuns) and green squares (equivalent to cans). They may be lighted also.



Red Right Returning

is a reminder of the correct course when returning from open waters or heading upstream.

Non-Lateral Markers 312 IAC 5-4

Non-lateral markers are navigational aids that give information other than the edges of safe water areas. The most common are regulatory markers which are white and use orange markings and black lettering. These markers are found on lakes and rivers.

**Information**

Squares indicate where to find food, supplies, repairs, etc., and give directions and other information.

**Controlled**

Circles indicate a controlled area such as speed limit, no fishing or anchoring, ski only or no skiing, or “slow, no wake.”

**Exclusion**

Crossed diamonds indicate areas off limits to all vessels such as swimming areas, dams, and spillways.

**Danger**

Diamonds warn of dangers such as rocks, shoals, construction, dams, or stumps. Always proceed with caution.

Other Non-Lateral Markers

Safe Water Markers are white with red vertical stripes and mark mid-channels or fairways. They may be passed on either side.



Inland Waters Obstruction Markers are white with black vertical stripes and indicate an obstruction to navigation. You should not pass between these buoys and the nearest shore.

Mooring Buoy

Mooring buoys are white with a blue horizontal band and are found in marinas and other areas where vessels are allowed to anchor.



Weather Emergencies

Weather can change very rapidly and create unexpected situations for boat operators. Even meteorologists have trouble predicting rapid weather changes. You should always monitor weather developments. One way is to tune a VHF radio to the frequencies.

What to Do if Caught in Severe Weather

■ Prepare the boat to handle severe weather.

- Slow down, but keep enough power to maintain headway and steering.
- Close all hatches, windows, and doors to reduce the chance of swamping.
- Stow any unnecessary gear.
- Turn on your boat's navigation lights. If there is fog, sound your fog horn.
- Keep bilges free of water. Be prepared to remove water by bailing.
- If there is lightning, disconnect all electrical equipment. Stay as clear of metal objects as possible.

■ Prepare your passengers for severe weather.

- Have everyone put on a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)–approved PFD. If passengers are already wearing their PFDs, make sure they are secured properly.
- Have your passengers sit on the vessel floor close to the centerline for their safety and to make the boat more stable.

■ Decide whether to go to shore or ride out the storm.

- If possible, head for the nearest shore that is safe to approach. If already caught in a storm, it may be best to ride it out in open water rather than try to approach the shore in heavy wind and waves.
- Head the bow into the waves at a 45-degree angle. PWC should head directly into the waves.

- If the engine stops, drop a “sea anchor” on a line off the bow to keep the bow headed into the wind and reduce drifting while you ride out the storm. In an emergency, a bucket will work as a sea anchor.
- If the sea anchor is not sufficient, anchor using your conventional anchor to prevent your boat from drifting into dangerous areas.

VHF Frequencies Broadcasting NOAA Weather Reports

162.400 MHz	162.450 MHz	162.500 MHz	162.550 MHz
162.425 MHz	162.475 MHz	162.525 MHz	

These are the most commonly used VHF channels on United States waters.

Channel 6 Intership safety communications.

Channel 9 Communications between vessels (commercial and recreational), and ship to coast (calling channel in designated USCG districts).

Channel 13 Navigational use by commercial, military, and recreational vessels at bridges, locks, and harbors.

Channel 16 Distress and safety calls to USCG and others, and to initiate calls to other vessels; often called the “hailing” channel. (Some regions use other channels as the hailing channel.) When hailing, contact the other vessel, quickly agree to another channel, and then switch to that channel to continue conversation.

Channel 22 Communications between the USCG and the maritime public, both recreational and commercial. Severe weather warnings, hazards to navigation, and other safety warnings are broadcast on this channel.

Channels 24–28 Public telephone calls (to marine operator).

Channels 68, 69, and 71 Recreational vessel radio channels and ship to coast.

Channel 70 Digital selective calling “alert channel.”

Specifically for PWC

Although a PWC is considered an inboard vessel and comes under the same rules and requirements of any other vessel, there are specific considerations for the PWC operator.

Steering and Stopping a PWC

steering control



steering nozzle

- PWC are propelled by drawing water into a pump and then forcing it out under pressure through a steering nozzle at the back of the unit. This “jet” of pressurized water is directed by the steering control—when the steering control is turned, the steering nozzle turns in the same direction. For example, if the steering control is turned right, the nozzle turns right and the jet of water pushes the back of the vessel to the left, which causes the PWC to turn right.

Remember—no power means no steering control...

Most PWC and other jet-drive vessels must have power in order to maintain control. If you allow the engine on a PWC or other jet-propelled vessel to return to idle or shut off during operation, you may lose all steering control. Many PWC will continue in the direction they were headed before the engine was shut off, no matter which way the steering control is turned. New PWC allow for off-throttle steering.

- **Most PWC do not have brakes.** Always allow plenty of room for stopping. Just because you release the throttle or shut off the engine does not mean you will stop immediately. Even PWC that have a braking system do not stop immediately.

Engine Cut-Off Switch (ECOS)

IC 14-15-12-9

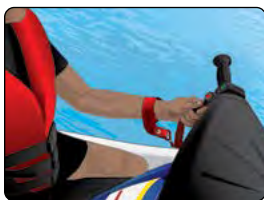
Self-circling capability

Sec. 9. A personal watercraft that does not have self-circling capability shall not be operated on public waters unless:

1. the personal watercraft is equipped with a lanyard type engine cutoff switch; and
2. the lanyard is attached to the person, clothing, or personal flotation device of the operator.

- Most PWC and powerboats come equipped by the manufacturer with an important device called an emergency engine cut-off switch (ECOS).

This is a safety device that is designed to shut off the engine if the operator is thrown from the proper operating position. The USCG requires that the operators of vessels equipped with an ECOS use the device at all times.



- A lanyard is attached to the ECOS and the operator's wrist or personal flotation device (PFD). This switch shuts off the engine if the operator falls off the PWC or out of the powerboat. If your vessel does not come equipped with an ECOS, you should have one installed.
- It is illegal to ride your PWC without attaching the lanyard properly between the switch and yourself.

Remember...

Beginning April 2021, a new federal rule requires operators of recreational vessels less than 26 feet in length to use the ECOS if the vessel is equipped with such a device. Operators must use the ECOS whenever the vessel is operating on plane or above displacement speed.

Be sure to check with the state boating agency where you are boating to determine how this new USCG rule applies locally. For more information on this requirement, visit uscgboating.org/recreational-boaters/engine-cut-off-switch-faq.php.

Reboarding a Capsized PWC

After a fall, the PWC could be overturned completely. You should be familiar with the proper procedure to right the PWC and to reboard from the rear of the craft.

- Most manufacturers have placed a decal at the rear or bottom of the craft that indicates the direction to roll your PWC to return it to an upright position. If no decal exists, check your owner's manual or ask the dealer. If you roll it over the wrong way, you could damage your PWC.
- Practice reboarding with someone else around to make sure you can handle it alone. Don't ride your PWC if you are very tired because reboarding would be difficult. Also, avoid riding where there are strong currents or winds, which could hamper your reboarding efforts.



Courtesy When Encountering Other Vessels

- Jumping the wake of a passing boat, or riding too close to another PWC or boat, creates risks and is restricted or even prohibited in some states. The vessel making the wake may block the PWC operator's view of oncoming traffic and also conceal the PWC operator from approaching vessels.
- Excessive noise from PWC often makes them unwelcome with other vessel operators and people on shore. Be a courteous PWC operator.
 - Vary your operating area, and do not keep repeating the same maneuver.
 - Avoid congregating with other PWC operators near shore, which increases annoying noise levels.
 - Avoid making excessive noise near residential and camping areas, particularly early in the morning.
 - Avoid maneuvers that cause the engine exhaust to lift out of the water because that increases noise levels.
 - Do not modify your engine exhaust system if it increases the noise. Improperly modified exhausts will not make your PWC faster and may raise the noise to an illegal level.

Environmental Considerations

When operating your PWC, consider the effect you may have on the environment.

- Make sure that the water you operate in is at least 30 inches deep. Riding in shallow water can cause bottom sediments or aquatic vegetation to be sucked into the pump, damaging your PWC and the environment.
- Avoid causing erosion by operating at slow speed and by not creating a wake when operating near shore or in narrow streams or rivers.
- Do not dock or beach your PWC in reeds and grasses. This could damage fragile environments.
- Take extra care when fueling your PWC in or near the water. Oil and gasoline spills are very detrimental to the aquatic environment. Fuel on land if possible.
- Never use your PWC to disturb, chase, or harass wildlife.



Other PWC Considerations

IC 14-15-12-8

Personal flotation devices

Sec. 8. A person shall not operate a personal watercraft on public waters unless every individual:

1. operating;
2. riding on; or
3. being towed by;

the personal watercraft is wearing a personal flotation device that meets the requirements for designation by the United States Coast Guard as a wearable personal flotation device, if applicable.

- Remember that everyone on board a PWC must *wear* a PFD. Inflatables are not approved for PWC use.
- Keep hands, feet, loose clothing, and hair away from the pump intake area. Before cleaning debris away from the pump intake, be sure to shut off the engine.
- Keep everyone clear of the steering nozzle unless the PWC is shut off. The water jet can cause severe injuries.
- Frequently inspect your PWC's electrical systems (e.g., starter and engine gauge connections) to ensure there is no potential for electrical spark. Gas fumes could collect in the engine compartment and an explosion could occur. After fueling, sniff the engine compartment for any evidence of gas fumes.
- Never exceed the manufacturer's recommended capacity for your PWC.
- Know your limits, and ride according to your abilities.

Before Going Out

All operators are required to obey laws that regulate your vessel's registration, titling, and operation.

Registering Your Boat or Personal Watercraft

IC 9-18.1-14.5-1

- An Indiana certificate of registration is required to operate a vessel legally on public waters in Indiana. The only exceptions are:
 - Non-motorized vessels. (*Vessels using an electric trolling motor require registration.*)
 - Vessels purchased from a State of Indiana-registered, licensed dealer for 45 days if the operator possesses a bill of sale and a temporary license plate that is displayed on the forward portion of the boat.
 - Vessels that are moored on the Indiana part of Lake Michigan for 180 consecutive days or less.
 - Vessels that are registered in another state **and...**
 - Are operated on Indiana waters for 60 consecutive days or less **or...**
 - Have paid the current year's Indiana boat excise tax.
- Apply to any Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) License Branch to obtain a certificate of registration.
- *You must keep the certificate on board and available for inspection by an enforcement officer whenever the vessel is operated.*
- If your vessel requires registration, it is illegal to operate it or allow others to operate it unless it is registered and properly numbered.
- If you lose or destroy your certificate of registration, you must apply to the BMV for a duplicate and pay a processing fee.
- Registration information must be kept current.
 - If you change your address, you must notify a BMV License Branch within 31 days of the change.

INDIANA CERTIFICATE OF WATERCRAFT REGISTRATION

Owner: JOHN DOE
100 NORTH ST.
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204

Vessel Name: _____ Hull Number: _____

Registration Fee: _____ Title Fee: _____ Excise Tax: _____

Important: REGISTRATION MUST BE RENEWED TO BE VALID. Renewal is required by the expiration date of the registration. Renewal can be done online or by mail. The registration must be displayed on the vessel.

- If you transfer ownership of your vessel or if it is destroyed, you should report it to your local BMV License Branch within 15 days.
- 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 **1-800-799-8362**). *USCG–documented vessels also must be registered but are exempt from displaying the “IN” registration number.*
- If a registered vessel is sold or otherwise transferred to another person, the “buyer”:
 - Must apply for the certificate of registration to be transferred to his or her name within 45 days from the date of purchase.
 - May operate a vessel with a bill of sale with the following information: the purchaser’s name, address, date of purchase, make, model, and vessel identification number provided by the manufacturer not more than 45 days from the date of purchase.

Boat Excise Tax IC 6-6-11-8

Indiana law requires owners of vessels that are operated, used, docked, or stored in Indiana to pay the boat excise tax.

- Vessels subject to excise tax include:
 - Motorboats registered in Indiana
 - Motorboats registered in another state and being operated in Indiana waters for more than 60 consecutive days or moored on the Indiana part of Lake Michigan for more than 180 days
 - Sailboats
- The amount of boat excise tax paid:
 - Is based on the value of the vessel when new and is reduced 10% each year up to a 50% reduction of the original amount.
 - Is a set fee for vessels that are stored in Indiana for 60 consecutive days or more in a boating year but are not used or docked in Indiana waters.
- When you receive your certificate of registration, you also receive two excise tax decals.
- Decals include the date of expiration. Only the current decals may be displayed.

- The boat excise tax decals are valid for one year. Owners of registered vessels will be sent a renewal notice to their residence automatically.
- If you lose or destroy your decals, you must apply to the BMV for duplicates and submit a processing fee.

Types of Fees Related to Registering a Boat or Personal Watercraft IC 6-6-11

- **Registration fee:** One-time fee charged at the time a vessel is purchased. The fee is based on the vessel's length.
- **Boat excise tax fee:** Fee collected annually. The fee is based on value of the vessel when new.
- **Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fee:** Fee of \$5.00 assessed every time excise tax decals are purchased. (This fee is waived the year that the one-time registration fee is collected.) The DNR uses this fee to enforce boating laws and improve navigable waters.
- **Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) fee:** Fee assessed every time excise tax decals are purchased. The fee is based on the value of the vessel. Read more about LARE in "Lake & River Enhancement Program."

Titling Your Boat or Personal Watercraft IC 9-17-2-1

A watercraft that must be registered also must have a certificate of title, unless the vessel was acquired by the owner before January 1, 1986.

Residents of Other States...

- Indiana registration and titling is not required for vessels that are registered in another state *and...*
 - Are operated on Indiana waters for less than 60 consecutive days *or...*
 - Their owners have paid the current year's Indiana boat excise tax.
- Indiana boat excise tax is required for a vessel that is registered in another state if that vessel is operated, used, or docked in Indiana for 22 or more consecutive days.
- Indiana boat excise tax is required for a boat moored in the Indiana part of Lake Michigan for more than 180 days.

Display of Number and Decals 140 IAC 9-4-2.5

- The registration number and excise tax 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's color must contrast sharply with its background.
 - Number must be in at least three-inch-high **BLOCK** letters.
 - Letters must be separated from the numbers by a two-inch space: **IN 8811 BM**.
 - Number must be a single color and clearly legible from a distance of 100 feet.
 - Excise tax decals must be affixed on both sides of the bow, to the right of and within three inches of the number.
 - No other numbers may be displayed on either side of the bow.



Spaces should appear here.

Excise Tax Decal



- Certain sailboats may qualify for an alternate display location for these decals (312 IAC 5-12.5-1).
- 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.

Registration or Titling Questions?

- Visit any BMV License Branch or go online at www.in.gov/bmv/. You also can call the BMV at **1-888-692-6841**.
- Registration and title application forms are available at any BMV License Branch and online.



Lake Permits

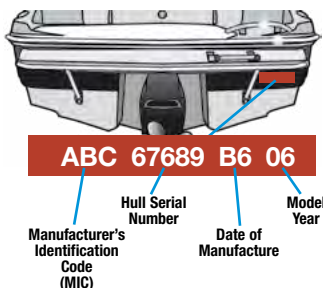
All privately owned, motorized, and non-motorized boats moored or operating on state park, state forest, or reservoir lakes in Indiana must have a lake permit displayed on the boat.

- Permits are available at any state park or reservoir offices, at the DNR customer service center, or online at stores.innsgifts.com.
- The minimum fees for permits are as follows.
 - Motorized watercraft: \$25.00
 - Non-motorized watercraft: \$5.00



Hull Identification Number (HIN)

- The Hull Identification Number (HIN) is a unique, 12-digit number assigned by the manufacturer to vessels built after 1972.
- These numbers:
 - Distinguish one vessel 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.
- You may obtain the HIN for a home-built boat or replace a missing HIN by applying to your local BMV License Branch.



Who May Operate a Vessel

IC 14-15-11-1

“Bureau” defined

Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, “bureau” refers to the bureau of motor vehicles established by IC 9-14-7-1.

IC 14-15-11-3

“Driver’s license” defined

Sec. 3. As used in this chapter, “driver’s license” means:

1. an Indiana driver’s license; or
2. a license to operate a motor vehicle issued under the laws of a jurisdiction other than Indiana.

IC 14-15-11-4

“Indiana driver’s license” defined

Sec. 4. As used in this chapter, “Indiana driver’s license” means:

1. an operator’s license;
2. a chauffeur’s license; or
3. a public passenger chauffeur’s license; that is issued to an individual by the bureau of motor vehicles under IC 9-24.

IC 14-15-11-5

“Individual” defined

Sec. 5. As used in this chapter, “individual” means an individual human being.

IC 14-15-11-6

“Motorboat” defined

Sec. 6. (a) As used in this chapter, “motorboat” means a watercraft that is:

1. equipped with an internal combustion, a steam, or an electrical motor or engine that is inboard or outboard; or
2. propelled by any mechanical means.

(b) The term includes a personal watercraft.

(c) The term includes a sailboat that is equipped with a motor or an engine described in subsection (a)(1) when in operation, whether or not the sails are hoisted.

(d) The term does not include a boat that is propelled by only one (1) motor or engine if the motor or engine is rated at not more than ten (10) horsepower.

IC 14-15-11-7/IC 14-8-2-202.5**“Personal watercraft” defined**

Sec. 202.5. “Personal watercraft”, for purposes of IC 14-15, means a watercraft:

1. whose primary source of motive power is an inboard motor powering a water jet pump; and
2. that is designed to be operated by a person who sits, stands, or kneels on the surface of the watercraft rather than sitting or standing inside the watercraft.

IC 14-15-11-8/IC 14-8-2-226**“Public waters” defined**

Sec. 226. “Public waters”, for purposes of IC 14-15, means every lake, river, stream, canal, ditch, and body of water that is:

1. subject to the jurisdiction of the state; or
2. owned or controlled by a public utility.

IC 14-15-11-9**License requirements**

Sec. 9. (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), an individual may not operate a motorboat on public waters unless the individual holds a valid driver's license.

(b) An individual who is at least fifteen (15) years of age and who does not hold a valid driver's license may operate a motorboat on public waters if the individual:

1. has been issued an identification card by the bureau under IC 9-24-16 or a photo-exempt identification under IC 14-15-11-9; and
2. has successfully completed a boating education course approved by the department for the purposes of this chapter.

(c) An individual who:

1. is at least twenty-one (21) years of age; and
2. does not hold:
 - A. a valid driver's license; or
 - B. a driver's license that is suspended or revoked;
 may operate a motorboat on public waters if the individual is issued an identification card by the bureau under IC 9-24-16 before January 1, 1996.

IC 14-15-11-10**Knowing or intentional violations**

Sec. 10. (a) Except as provided in section 11 of this chapter, an individual who knowingly or intentionally operates a motorboat on public waters in violation of section 9 of this chapter commits a Class C infraction.

(b) In a proceeding to enforce this section, the burden is on the defendant to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that, at the time of the alleged offense, the defendant held a valid driver's license or identification card.

IC 14-15-11-11**Operation of motorboat while license is suspended or revoked**

Sec. 11. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), a person who operates a motorboat upon public waters while the person's Indiana driver's license is suspended or revoked commits a Class A infraction. However, if:

1. a person knowingly or intentionally violates this subsection; and
2. less than ten (10) years have elapsed between the date a judgment was entered against the person for a prior unrelated violation of this subsection, IC 9-1-4-52 (repealed July 1, 1991), IC 9-24-18-5 (repealed July 1, 2000), or IC 9-24-19 and the date the violation described in subdivision (1) was committed; the person commits a Class A misdemeanor.

(b) If:

1. a person operates a motorboat upon public waters while the person's Indiana driver's license is suspended or revoked; and
2. the person's suspension or revocation was a result of the person's conviction of an offense (as defined in IC 35-31.5-2-215); the person commits a Class A misdemeanor. However, notwithstanding IC 35-50-3-2, a person who violates this subsection shall be imprisoned for a fixed term of not less than sixty (60) days and not more than one (1) year. Notwithstanding IC 35-50-3-1, the court may not suspend any part of the sentence except that part of the sentence exceeding sixty (60) days.

(c) In addition to any other penalty imposed for a conviction under this section, the court may recommend that the person's privileges to operate a motorboat upon public waters be suspended for a fixed period of not more than two (2) years.

(d) In a prosecution under this section, the burden is on the defendant to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that, at the time of the alleged offense, the defendant held a valid Indiana driver's license.

IC 14-15-11-12

Unlawful authorization to operate motorboat

Sec. 12. (a) A person may not authorize or knowingly permit a motorboat that is:

1. owned by the person; or
2. under the person's control; to be driven by a person whose operation of the motorboat violates this chapter.

(b) A person who violates this section commits a Class C infraction.

IC 14-15-11-13

Rules

Sec. 13. (a) The bureau of motor vehicles and the natural resources commission established by IC 14-10-1-1 shall adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 to administer this chapter.

(b) The bureau of motor vehicles shall adopt rules concerning the following matters:

1. The suspension of a motorboat operator's license under section 14 of this chapter.
2. The assessment of points under section 17 of this chapter against a person who commits a misdemeanor by operating a motorboat.

(c) The natural resources commission shall adopt rules concerning the following matters:

1. The duties of the department under this chapter.
2. The information that a boating education course must offer in order to be approved by the department for purposes of this chapter.

IC 14-15-11-14**Suspension or revocation of driver's license by bureau**

Sec. 14. (a) A court may suspend or revoke the driver's license of a person upon the conviction of the person of a crime based on a violation of IC 14-15-3, IC 14-15-8 (before its repeal), IC 35-46-9, or IC 14-15-12.

(b) In suspending or revoking a driver's license under this section, the bureau shall follow the procedure set forth in IC 9-30-4.

IC 14-15-11-15**Suspension or revocation of driver's license on recommendation of court**

Sec. 15. (a) A court in which an individual is convicted of a crime based on a violation of IC 14-15-3, IC 14-15-8 (before its repeal), IC 35-46-9, or IC 14-15-12 relating to the operation of a motorboat shall forward a certified abstract of the record of the conviction to the bureau.

(b) If, in the opinion of the court, an individual referred to in subsection (a) should be deprived of the privilege of operating a vehicle or motorboat, the court shall recommend the suspension of the Indiana driver's license issued to the individual for a fixed period. The period of the suspension shall be established by the court but may not exceed one (1) year.

(c) Upon receiving the recommendation of the court under subsection (b), the bureau shall suspend the individual's license for the period recommended by the court.

(d) A certified abstract forwarded to the bureau under subsection (a):

1. must be in the form prescribed by the bureau; and
2. shall be accepted by an administrative agency or a court as prima facie evidence of the conviction and all other action stated in the abstract.

IC 14-15-11-16**Boating education course**

Sec. 16. (a) If a person's Indiana driver's license is suspended under section 15 of this chapter, the court that recommends the suspension of the person's driver's license may require the person, as a prerequisite to the ending of the suspension, to successfully complete a boating education course approved by the department for the purposes of this chapter.

(b) A court that makes the ending of the suspension of a person's Indiana driver's license conditional upon the person's completion of the boating education course under subsection (a) may also order the refunding to the person of part or all of the fine paid by the person upon conviction of the crime for which the person's license was suspended, upon the person's completion of the boating education course.

IC 35-46-9

Assessment of points for motorboat violations

Sec. 17. (a) For purposes of the point system for Indiana traffic convictions operated by the bureau under 140 IAC 1-4.5, the bureau shall assess points against a person who commits a crime by operating a motorboat in violation of:

1. IC 14-15-3;
2. IC 35-46-9 (or IC 14-15-8 before its repeal); or
3. IC 14-15-12.

(b) The bureau shall assess points against a person under this section for each crime referred to in subsection (a) that is committed by the person.

(c) The point study committee appointed by the commissioner under 140 IAC 1-4.5-3, in consultation with the department, shall determine the number of points assessed under subsection (a) for each type of criminal violation of IC 14-15-3, IC 14-15-8 (before its repeal), IC 35-46-9, or IC 14-15-12 based on the evaluation by the committee of the danger to human life, human physical safety, and property posed by the violation.

- All motorboat or personal watercraft (PWC) operators must have a valid driver's license to operate on all Indiana public waters.
- Motorboat operators who are 15 years of age may operate a motorboat or PWC until they become a licensed driver *only if* they complete a boater education course approved by the DNR and have on board an ID card issued by the Indiana BMV.
- A person who has never been licensed by the BMV must complete an approved boater education course successfully and have on board an ID issued by the Indiana BMV to operate a motorboat legally.

- No one under 15 years of age may legally operate a motorboat greater than 10 horsepower or a PWC.
- If you operate your motorboat recklessly while intoxicated or break the PWC laws, you could have points assessed against your vehicle driver's license.
- On Indiana boundary waters, Indiana residents are required to have a driver's license. Non-residents are not required to have a license unless operating in an embayment, river, or stream in Indiana.

Marine Events IC 14-15-7-3(a); 312 IAC 5-3-1

A permit may be required for any of the following situations occurring on public waters. Permits are issued following a site investigation.

- Persons planning an event or wanting to place a structure in the waterway must contact the DNR, Law Enforcement Division headquarters for more information and forms. This applies to events or structures such as:
 - Boat race
 - Water-ski event
 - Water-ski course or jump
 - Swimming platform or anchored swim raft
 - Buoys, markers, or flags
- Major organized boating activities to be conducted on public waters require a permit.
 - If you plan to host an event that involves 15 or more watercraft as participants or an event that will draw 50 or more boats as spectators, you need a permit.
 - If you conduct an event on public waters that will disrupt normal boat traffic, you need to apply.



Fishing Tournaments 312 IAC 5-3.5

- In Indiana, fishing tournaments on public waters can be regulated only by the DNR. However, a county or city park department (or another local entity such as a conservancy district) might place restrictions on the use of an access site, including restrictions pertaining to fishing tournaments. It is advisable to check with the owner/operator of the launch facility before planning your event to see what regulations apply. For more information, visit www.in.gov/dnr/fish-and-wildlife/home/.

What is considered a fishing tournament?

A fishing tournament is defined as an activity involving 15 or more watercraft used for taking fish where:

- Persons compete for a trophy, citation, cash, or prize
- or...*
- A fee is charged to participants.

- DNR properties that have public water where fishing tournaments are managed include all of the reservoir properties: Brookville, Hardy, Huntington, Lieber, Mississinewa, Monroe, Patoka, Raccoon, and Salamonie lakes. Anyone wishing to hold a tournament on any of these lakes must contact the DNR, State Parks and Reservoirs.
- In addition, the Natural Resource Commission has adopted rules governing fishing tournaments. These rules apply to Lake Wawasee and Syracuse Lake in Kosciusko County.

Diver-Down Flags IC 14-15-9

- Indiana law requires that scuba divers or snorkelers display a diver-down flag to mark the diving area. The diver must stay within 100 feet of the flag. Boats must stay at least 150 feet away from the flag unless directly involved in supporting the diver.
- Two types of flags are used to indicate diving activity.



A rectangular red flag, at least 12 x 12 inches, with a white diagonal stripe is used to indicate the presence of a submerged diver in the area. Indiana law requires that divers display this flag prominently and stay within 100 feet of the flag.



A blue-and-white International Code Flag A (or Alfa flag), at least 3.3 feet (one meter) high and visible from all directions, must be displayed on boats on federal waters whenever these boats are restricted in their ability to maneuver by the diving operation.

Enforcement IC 14-15-10-1

- The boating laws of Indiana are enforced by the conservation officers of the Indiana DNR, the USCG officers, and any other authorized peace officer or law enforcement officer.
- Officers have the authority to stop and board boats in order to check for compliance with state and federal laws.
- The USCG also has enforcement authority on "Waters of Concurrent Jurisdiction."



Required Equipment

When preparing to go out, the operator must check that the legally required equipment is on board.

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

IC 14-15-2-6 (b)

Personal flotation devices

Sec. 6. (b) All boats must be equipped with the number and type of personal flotation devices listed in this subsection. A person may not operate a boat unless the boat contains:

1. for each person on board, one (1) personal flotation device that meets the requirements for designation by the United States Coast Guard as a wearable personal flotation device; and
2. for a boat, except a canoe or kayak, at least sixteen (16) feet in length and in addition to the requirements of subdivision (1), one (1) personal flotation device that meets the requirements for designation by the United States Coast Guard as a throwable personal flotation device.

- All vessels must carry one wearable USCG–approved personal flotation device (PFD), sometimes called life jacket, for each person on board and being towed.
- All PFDs must be in good and serviceable condition and readily accessible. Wearable PFDs must be of the proper size for the intended wearer. Sizing for PFDs is based on body weight and chest size.
- In addition to the above requirement, vessels 16 feet in length or longer (except a canoe or kayak) must have one throwable USCG–approved device on board and readily accessible.
- If a person chooses to wear a PFD that is not USCG approved (when not specifically required), a properly fitting USCG–approved PFD must be carried on board the vessel to meet the state and federal carriage requirements.
- Each person on board a PWC must *wear* a PFD.

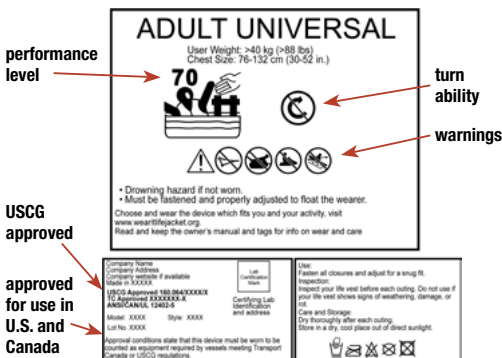
- All persons being towed behind a PWC on water skis or any other device must *wear* a USCG–approved PFD. Ski belts are not USCG approved.
- In addition to the requirements above, on “Waters of Concurrent Jurisdiction”:
 - A child under 13 years of age must *wear* a PFD except when the child is below deck in an enclosed cabin or the vessel is docked or at anchor.
 - Anyone towed by a vessel other than a PWC on water skis, a surfboard, a kite, or a similar device should *wear* a USCG–approved PFD. Ski belts are not USCG approved.

PFD Label

Every USCG–approved PFD has a label that contains important information. While boating, you may encounter old- or new-style PFD labels.

- The older, legacy labels have a type number (Types I–V).
 - The type number indicates the conditions and the intended use for which the PFD is designed.
 - PFDs with these labels may still be used in the country where they are approved as long as they are in serviceable condition.
- The new labels have a performance level icon that contains a number, typically ranging from 50 to 150.
 - A lower number means the PFD is intended for near-shore activities in calm waters. PFDs designed for near-shore use offer greater mobility and comfort. However, they will not turn most unconscious persons face up.
 - A higher number means the PFD is intended for offshore activities. PFDs designed for offshore use offer greater flotation, turning, and stability.
 - PFDs with these labels are approved for use in both the U.S. and Canada.

Not all PFDs available are USCG approved. Regardless if the PFD label is in the old or new style, there must be a USCG approval number, and the PFD must be used in accordance with the labeling information to meet the legal requirements.



Warnings

Some PFDs are **not** approved for certain activities:

- Water-skiing
- PWC or wakeboarding
- Tubing
- Whitewater paddling

Turn Ability



The PFD will turn an unconscious person face up. Test before use.



The PFD will not turn an unconscious person face up.

Fire Extinguishers 312 IAC 5-13-3

Effective April 20, 2022, any non-rechargeable (disposable) fire extinguisher that is older than 12 years should be removed from service. Refer to the date of manufacturing stamped on the bottle; for example, "05" means "2005."

- Federal law requires all vessels, including PWC, to have a Type B fire extinguisher on board if one or more of the following conditions exist:
 - Any 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)

- You are not required to carry a fire extinguisher on a motorboat with an outboard motor.
- 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.
- When required by the USCG, fire extinguishers must be on board a vessel and readily accessible—where they can be easily reached. When deciding on a place to store a fire extinguisher, make sure to consider how easy it is to reach in the event of a fire. It is recommended that the fire extinguisher be conspicuously and securely mounted on its intended hanger or bracket.

The following information is **effective April 20, 2022**.

- Vessels that have a **model year** of 2018 and newer may carry only 5-B or 20-B rated fire extinguishers with date stamp.
- Vessels with a model year between 1953 and 2017 may carry either:
 - Unexpired 5-B or 20-B rated fire extinguishers *or...*
 - B-I or B-II rated fire extinguishers that are in good and serviceable condition.

Model Year means the period beginning June 1 of a year and ending on July 31 of the following year and being designated by the year in which it ends.

Use this chart to determine the size and quantity required for your vessel.

Length of Vessel	Without Fixed System	With Fixed System*
Less than 26 ft.	one 5-B	none
26 ft. to less than 40 ft.	two 5-B (or one 20-B)	one 5-B
40 ft. to less than 65 ft.	three 5-B (or one 20-B and one 5-B)	two 5-B (or one 20-B)
*refers to a permanently installed fire extinguisher system		

Note: One 20-B portable fire extinguisher may be substituted for two 5-B portable fire extinguishers. For vessels with a model year between 1953 and 2017, one 20-B/B-II portable fire extinguisher may be substituted for two 5-B/B-I portable fire extinguishers.

- Extinguishers must not be expired or appear to have been previously used. They must be maintained in good and serviceable condition. Good and serviceable condition means that the fire extinguisher on board:
 - Is charged and indicates it is charged if the extinguisher has a pressure gauge reading or indicator *and...*
 - Has a pin lock that is firmly in place *and...*
 - Does not show visible signs of significant corrosion or damage *and...*
 - Has a discharge nozzle that is clean and free of obstructions.

Backfire Flame Arrestors

IC 14-15-2-3

Carburetor backfire arrest device

Sec. 3. The carburetor on an inboard motorboat must be equipped with a stock factory device:

1. designed and constructed to arrest backfire; and
2. of a make or type approved by the USCG.

Backfire flame arrestors are designed to prevent the ignition of gasoline vapors in case the engine backfires.

- All powerboats (except outboards) that are fueled with gasoline must have a USCG–approved backfire flame arrestor on each carburetor (must comply with SAE J-1928 or UL 1111 standards).
- Periodically clean the flame arrestor(s) and check for damage.

Ventilation Systems

IC 14-15-2-2

Bilge ventilators

Sec. 2. The following must be equipped with at least two (2) bilge ventilators fitted with cowls, or the equivalent, and designed and constructed to permit the safe diffusion into the air of all inflammable or explosive gases:

1. An inboard motorboat that uses motor fuel having a flash point of not more than one hundred ten degrees (110°) Fahrenheit, as determined by a tagliabue or equivalent closed cup test device.
2. The greater part of the bilge of a motorboat that is not at all times open and exposed to the air.

- 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.
- 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.



Mufflers

IC 14-15-2-4

Mufflers; underwater exhaust

Sec. 4. (a) This section does not apply to a motorboat competing in and during a motorboat race for which a permit has been issued by the department.

(b) A person may not operate a motorboat on Indiana water unless the boat motor is equipped with:

1. a muffler;
2. an underwater exhaust; or
3. other device;

that muffles or suppresses the sound of the exhaust.

Vessel operators may not hear sound signals or voices if the engine is not adequately muffled.

- All vessel engines must have a factory-installed muffler or exhaust water manifold for noise reduction or another effective muffling system.
- It is illegal to operate a motorboat without a muffler or equipped with a muffler cutout, bypass, or similar device.

Nighttime Speed

IC 14-15-3-8

Night speed limit

Sec. 8. Subject to section 9 of this chapter, a person may not operate a boat during the period between sunset and sunrise at a speed greater than ten (10) miles per hour.

Navigation Lights

IC 14-15-2-10

Lights

Sec. 10. (a) A person may not operate a boat upon public water during the period between sunset and sunrise that is not equipped with a light required by:

1. **33 CFR 83**; and
2. this chapter.

(b) The light required by subsection (a) must be:

1. in good repair and operating condition; and
2. displayed and lighted or burning except as otherwise permitted.

IC 14-15-2-13

Hand lanterns or flashlights

Sec. 13. (a) This section applies to the following:

1. Nonpowered boats including canoes and kayaks.
2. Sailboats not more than twenty-two (22) feet in length under sail alone.
3. Boats powered only by electric motor on lakes restricted to propulsion solely by oars, paddles, or electric motors.
4. Any boat using an electric motor for positioning purposes only.

(b) A boat must be equipped with a hand portable lantern or flashlight not affixed or attached to any part of the boat and capable of throwing a white light visible for a distance of at least two (2) miles. The operator of the boat shall display the same or the white light aft, if available, in sufficient time to avoid a collision with any other boat that is being operated in accordance with this article.

IC 14-15-2-15

Violations

Sec. 15. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), a person who violates this chapter commits a Class C infraction.

(b) A person who violates section 7(c) or 8 of this chapter commits a Class A infraction. Notwithstanding IC 34-28-5-4 (a), a judgment of at least one thousand dollars (\$1,000) shall be imposed for each Class A infraction committed in violation of section 7(c) or 8 of this chapter.

- 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
- No other lights that may be mistaken for required navigation lights may be exhibited.
- The required navigation lights differ depending on the type and size of your vessel.

Your Vessel	That Is	Must Display These Lights When Underway	As Shown In
• Motorboat • Sailboat under power	Powered by engine less than 15 hp	An all-round white light or both a masthead light and a sternlight visible from a distance of at least two miles	Figure 1
• Motorboat • Sailboat under power	Powered by engine 15 hp or greater	• Red and green sidelights visible from a distance of at least one mile • An all-round white light or both a masthead light and a sternlight visible from a distance of at least two miles	Figure 2
Sailboat under sail	More than 22 ft. in length	• Red and green sidelights visible from a distance of at least one mile • A sternlight visible from a distance of at least two miles	Figure 3
• Sailboat under sail • Canoe or kayak • Vessel with an electric motor (on lakes restricted to propulsion solely by oars, paddles, or electric motors)	22 ft. or less in length	One lantern or flashlight shining a white light visible from a distance of at least two miles; the operator must display the light in sufficient time to avoid a collision with another vessel	Figure 4
Speed between sunset and sunrise is limited to 10 miles per hour. (IC 14-15-3-8).			

Figure 1



Figure 2

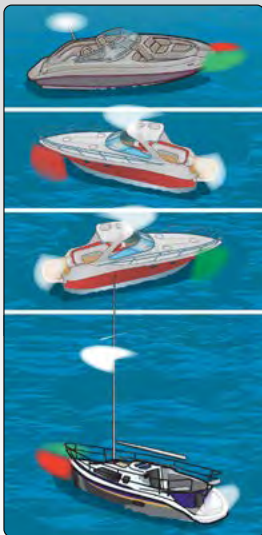


Figure 3



Figure 4



Sound-Producing Devices 312 IAC 5-13-4

- In periods of reduced visibility or whenever a boat operator needs to signal his or her intentions or position, a sound-producing device is essential. The device may be a whistle, horn, or bell that is audible for one-half mile.



- The following requirements apply to boats operating on "Waters of Concurrent Jurisdiction."
 - Vessels less than 39.4 feet (12 meters) in length, which includes PWC, are required to carry on board a whistle or horn or some other means to make an efficient sound signal audible for at least one-half mile.
 - Vessels that are 39.4 feet (12 meters) or more in length are required to carry on board a whistle or horn, *and* a bell that are audible for at least one mile.

Sound Signals

Some common sound signals that you should be familiar with as a recreational boater are as follows.

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 sailboats under sail.

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.

Visual Distress Signals (VDSs) 33 CFR 175.110-140

- Vessels used on “Waters of Concurrent Jurisdiction” that span wider from two miles from shore to shore must be equipped with USCG—approved (day and night) visual distress signals (VDSs).
- 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
- If pyrotechnic VDSs are used, a minimum of three must be carried in the vessel. Expired VDSs may be carried on board, but a minimum of three unexpired VDSs must be carried in the vessel.
- The following combinations of signals are examples of VDSs that could be carried on board to satisfy USCG requirements:
 - Three handheld red flares (day and night)
 - Three orange smoke signals (day only) and one electric light (night only)

Pyrotechnic VDSs

Orange Smoke—Handheld

Orange Smoke—Floating

Day Signal

Red Meteor

Day and Night Signal

Red Flare

Day and Night Signal

Non-Pyrotechnic VDSs

Electric Light

Night Signal

Orange Flag

Day Signal



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.



On the Water

In addition to the laws mentioned previously, here are some other Indiana regulations that apply when boat and PWC operators are on the water.

Unlawful Operation

IC 14-15-3-6

Dangerous operation prohibited

Sec. 6. A person may not operate a boat in a manner that does any of the following:

1. Unnecessarily endangers the person or property of another person.
2. Unnecessarily interferes with the safe and lawful use of public waters by another person.
3. Unnecessarily interferes with or obstructs a special event sanctioned or otherwise legally permitted by the department, another state, or the United States.

IC 14-15-12-10

Reasonable and prudent operation

Sec. 10. (a) A personal watercraft operated on public waters must at all times be operated in a reasonable and prudent manner.

(b) A person shall not operate a personal watercraft on public waters in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.

(c) A person shall not do any of the following while operating a personal watercraft on public waters:

1. Weave through congested watercraft traffic in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.
2. Follow a watercraft that is towing an individual on:
 - A. water skis;
 - B. a surf board; or
 - C. another water sport device;in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.
3. Jump the wake of another watercraft in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.
4. Cut between a boat and the individual or individuals being towed by the boat.

5. Cross paths with another watercraft when visibility around the other watercraft is so obstructed as to endanger human life, human physical safety, or property.
6. Steer a personal watercraft toward an object or individual in the water and turn sharply at close range in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.

Operating a boat or PWC in a manner that unnecessarily endangers a person or property of another person is considered dangerous. If you interfere with another person's lawful use of public water or obstruct a legally permitted marine event, you also may be charged. Should you be ticketed by a law enforcement officer for one of the crimes listed below, you could have points assessed against your driver's license.

■ Examples of illegal and reckless operation are:

- Operating a vessel at speeds that endanger human life, endanger human physical safety or property, or prevent stopping within an assured clear distance ahead. Be aware of and obey all regulatory markers, including those marked as **“idle speed”** or **“slow, no wake speed.”**
- Operating a vessel at speeds of more than 10 miles per hour between sunset and sunrise (IC 14-15-3-8).
- Weaving your vessel through congested waterway traffic or swerving at the last possible moment in order to avoid collision.
- Jumping the wake of another vessel such that you endanger human life, human physical safety, or property.
- Loading the vessel beyond the recommended capacity shown on the capacity plate installed by the vessel manufacturer.

- Causing a hazardous wake or wash from your vessel (IC 14-15-3-15).
- Boating in restricted areas without regard for other boaters or persons, posted speeds and wake restrictions, diver-down flags, etc. (312 IAC 5).
- Operating in a circular course around another vessel engaged in fishing or around a person swimming.
- Operating within 150 feet of a diver-down flag unless assisting the diver (IC 14-15-9-5).
- Allowing any occupant, including the operator, to ride on the gunwale or, if the vessel is less than 21 feet in length, on the bow where they may fall overboard (IC 14-15-3-24).

“Idle Speed” or “Slow, No Wake Speed” IC 14-8-2-129

These buoys or signs indicate a boating restricted area established to protect the safety of the public, ecological resources, and property. “Idle speed” means the slowest possible speed, not to exceed five miles per hour, so as to maintain steerage and produce minimal wake.

- Lake and channel restrictions vary depending on the size of the body of water or the waterway. You are required to operate at “idle speed” from the shoreline up to 200 feet from the shoreline, depending on the size of the lake or the width of the channel (IC 14-15-3-17).

IC 14-15-3-17**Minimum distance from shore lines**

Sec. 17. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), a person may not operate a motorboat within two hundred (200) feet of the shore line of a lake or channel of the lake at a speed greater than idle speed.

(b) This subsection applies to lakes formed by hydroelectric dams in a county having a population of:

1. more than twenty-four thousand five hundred (24,500) but less than twenty-five thousand (25,000); or
2. more than twenty thousand (20,000) but less than twenty thousand five hundred (20,500).

A person may not operate a motorboat within fifty (50) feet of the shore line at a speed greater than idle speed. However, on tributaries of lakes described in this subsection that are formed by hydroelectric dams, a person operating a motor boat may not approach or pass within two hundred (200) feet of the shore line of the tributary at a speed greater than idle speed. For the purposes of this chapter, tributaries on lakes formed by hydroelectric dams do not include the principal body of water flowing into the lakes.

Obstructing Navigation

IC 14-15-3-25

Mooring to or tampering with navigational aids

Sec. 25. A person may not:

1. moor or attach a boat to; or
2. move, remove, displace, tamper with, damage, or destroy; a buoy, beacon, light marker, stake, flag, or other aid to safe operation placed upon public water by or by others under the authority of the United States or the state.

IC 14-15-3-26

Anchoring so as to interfere with traffic

Sec. 26. A person may not anchor a boat in the traveled part of a river or channel so as to:

1. prevent;
 2. impede; or
 3. interfere with;
- the safe passage of another boat through the river or channel.

It is illegal to:

- 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, 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.

Alcohol and Drugs

IC 35-46-9-1

“Chemical test” defined

Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, “chemical test” means an analysis of an individual’s:

1. blood;
2. breath;
3. urine; or
4. other bodily substance;

for the determination of the presence of alcohol or a controlled substance.

IC 35-48-1-9

“Controlled substance” defined

Sec. 9. “Controlled substance” means a drug, substance, or immediate precursor in schedule I, II, III, IV, or V under:

1. IC 35-48-2-4, IC 35-48-2-6, IC 35-48-2-8, IC 35-48-2-10, or IC 35-48-2-12, if IC 35-48-2-14 does not apply; or
2. a rule adopted by the board, if IC 35-48-2-14 applies.

IC 35-48-1-9.3

“Controlled substance analog” defined

Sec. 9.3. (a) “Controlled substance analog” means a substance:

1. the chemical structure of which is substantially similar to that of a controlled substance included in schedule I or II and that has; or
2. that a person represents or intends to have; a narcotic, stimulant, depressant, or hallucinogenic effect on the central nervous system substantially similar to or greater than the narcotic, stimulant, depressant, or hallucinogenic effect on the central nervous system of a controlled substance included in schedule I or II.

(b) The definition set forth in subsection (a) does not include:

1. a controlled substance;
2. a substance for which there is an approved new drug application;

3. a substance for which an exemption is in effect for investigational use by a person under Section 505 of the federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (chapter 675, 52 Stat. 1052 (21 U.S.C. 355)), to the extent that conduct with respect to the substance is permitted under the exemption; or
4. a substance to the extent not intended for human consumption before an exemption takes effect regarding the substance.

IC 35-46-9-2

“Intoxicated” defined

Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, “intoxicated” means under the influence of:

1. alcohol;
2. a controlled substance;
3. any drug (as defined in IC 9-13-2-49.1) other than alcohol or a controlled substance;
4. any combination of alcohol, controlled substances, or drugs; or
5. any other substance, not including food and food ingredients (as defined in IC 6-2.5-1-20), tobacco (as defined in IC 6-2.5-1-28), or a dietary supplement (as defined in IC 6-2.5-1-16);

so that there is an impaired condition of thought and action and the loss of normal control of an individual's faculties.

IC 35-31.5-2-185

“Law enforcement officer” defined

Sec. 185. A police officer (including a correctional police officer), sheriff, constable, marshal, or a conservation officer.

IC 35-46-9-4**“Prima facie evidence of intoxication” defined**

Sec. 4. As used in this chapter, “prima facie evidence of intoxication” includes evidence that at the time of an alleged violation there was an alcohol concentration equivalent (as defined in IC 9-13-2-2.4) to at least eight-hundredths (0.08) gram of alcohol per:

1. one hundred (100) milliliters of the person's blood; or
2. two hundred ten (210) liters of the person's breath.

IC 35-46-9-5**“Relevant evidence” defined**

Sec. 5. As used in this chapter, “relevant evidence” includes evidence that at the time of the alleged violation there was an alcohol concentration equivalent (as defined in IC 9-13-2-2.4) to at least five-hundredths (0.05) gram and less than eight-hundredths (0.08) gram of alcohol per:

1. one hundred (100) milliliters of the person's blood; or
2. two hundred ten (210) liters of the person's breath.

IC 35-31.5-2-292**“Serious bodily injury” defined**

Sec. 292. “Serious bodily injury” means bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death or that causes:

1. serious permanent disfigurement;
2. unconsciousness;
3. extreme pain;
4. permanent or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member or organ; or
5. loss of a fetus.

IC 35-46-9-6**Operation of motorboat while intoxicated**

Sec. 6. (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), a person who operates a motorboat while:

1. having an alcohol concentration equivalent (as defined in IC 9-13-2-2.4) to at least eight-hundredths (0.08) gram of alcohol per:
 - A. one hundred (100) milliliters of the person's blood; or
 - B. two hundred ten (210) liters of the person's breath;
2. having a controlled substance listed in Schedule I or II of IC 35-48-2 or its metabolite in the person's body; or
3. intoxicated;

commits a Class C misdemeanor.

(b) The offense is a Level 6 felony if:

1. the person has a previous conviction under:
 - A. IC 14-1-5 (repealed);
 - B. IC 14-15-8-8 (repealed); or
 - C. this chapter; or
2. the offense results in serious bodily injury to another person.

(c) The offense is a Level 5 felony if the offense results in the death or catastrophic injury of another person.

(d) It is a defense to a prosecution under subsection (a)(2) that the accused person consumed the controlled substance in accordance with a valid prescription or order of a practitioner (as defined in IC 35-48-1-24) who acted in the course of the practitioner's professional practice.

IC 35-46-9-7**Operation of motorboat in violation of order**

Sec. 7. A person who operates a motorboat after the person has been ordered not to operate a motorboat under:

1. IC 14-15-8 (repealed); or
2. this chapter;

commits a Class A misdemeanor.

IC 35-46-9-8**Implied consent to chemical test**

Sec. 8. (a) A person who operates a motorboat in water over which Indiana has jurisdiction impliedly consents to submit to the chemical test provisions of this chapter as a condition of operating a motorboat in Indiana.

(b) If a person refuses to submit to a chemical test after having been advised that the refusal will result in the suspension of operating privileges or submits to a chemical test that results in prima facie evidence of intoxication, the arresting law enforcement officer shall do the following:

1. Obtain the person's driver's license or permit if the person is in possession of the document and issue a receipt valid until the initial hearing of the matter is held under IC 35-33-7-1.
2. Submit a probable cause affidavit to the prosecuting attorney of the county in which the alleged offense occurred.
3. Send a copy of the probable cause affidavit submitted under subdivision (2) to the bureau of motor vehicles.

IC 35-46-9-9**Offer of chemical test**

Sec. 9. (a) A law enforcement officer who has probable cause to believe that a person has committed an offense under this chapter shall offer the person the opportunity to submit to a chemical test. It is not necessary for the law enforcement officer to offer a chemical test to an unconscious person.

(b) A law enforcement officer may offer a person more than one (1) chemical test under this chapter. However, all tests must be administered within three (3) hours after the officer had probable cause to believe the person violated this chapter.

(c) A person must submit to each chemical test offered by a law enforcement officer to comply with the implied consent provisions of this chapter.

IC 35-46-9-11**Arrests; refusal to submit to chemical test**

Sec. 11. (a) If a chemical test results in relevant evidence that the person is intoxicated, the person may be arrested for an offense under this chapter.

(b) If a chemical test results in prima facie evidence that the person is intoxicated, the person shall be arrested for an offense under this chapter.

(c) A person who refuses to submit to a chemical test may be arrested for an offense under this chapter.

(d) At a proceeding under this chapter, a person's refusal to submit to a chemical test is admissible into evidence.

IC 35-46-9-13**Suspension of license for refusal to submit to a chemical test**

Sec. 13. If a person refuses to submit to a chemical test under this chapter, the law enforcement officer shall inform the person that the person's refusal will result in the suspension of the person's motorboat and motor vehicle operation privileges.

IC 9-30-16-1**Applicability; suspension of driving privileges**

Sec. 1. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), the following are ineligible for specialized driving privileges under this chapter:

1. A person who has never been an Indiana resident.
2. A person seeking specialized driving privileges with respect to a suspension based on the person's refusal to submit to a chemical test offered under IC 9-30-6 or IC 9-30-7.
3. A person whose driving privileges have been suspended or revoked under IC 9-24-10-7(b)(2)(A).

(b) This chapter applies to the following:

1. A person who held an operator's, a commercial driver's, a public passenger chauffeur's, or a chauffeur's license at the time of:
 - A. the criminal conviction for which the operation of a motor vehicle is an element of the offense;
 - B. any criminal conviction for an offense under IC 9-30-5; or

- C. committing the infraction of exceeding a worksite speed limit for the second time in one (1) year under IC 9-21-5-11(f).
- 2. A person who:
 - A. has never held a valid Indiana driver's license or does not currently hold a valid Indiana learner's permit; and
 - B. was an Indiana resident when the driving privileges for which the person is seeking specialized driving privileges were suspended.

(c) Except as specifically provided in this chapter, a court may suspend the driving privileges of a person convicted of any of the following offenses for a period up to the maximum allowable period of incarceration under the penalty for the offense:

- 1. Any criminal conviction in which the operation of a motor vehicle is an element of the offense.
- 2. Any criminal conviction for an offense under IC 9-30-5, IC 35-46-9, or IC 14-5-8 (before its repeal); or
- 3. Any offense under IC 35-42-1, IC 35-42-2, or IC 35-44.1-3-1 that involves the use of a vehicle.

(d) Except as provided in section 3.5 of this chapter, a suspension of driving privileges under this chapter may begin before the conviction. Multiple suspensions of driving privileges ordered by a court that are part of the same episode of criminal conduct shall be served concurrently. A court may grant credit time for any suspension that began before the conviction, except as prohibited by section 6(a)(2) of this chapter.

(e) If a person has had an ignition interlock device installed as a condition of specialized driving privileges or under IC 9-30-6-8 (d), the period of the installation shall be credited as part of the suspension of driving privileges.

(f) This subsection applies to a person described in subsection (b)(2). A court shall, as a condition of granting specialized driving privileges to the person, require the person to apply for and obtain an Indiana driver's license.

It is illegal to operate a motorboat or a PWC while intoxicated due to alcohol or drugs. Alcohol and drugs cause impaired balance, blurred vision, poor coordination, impaired judgment, and slower reaction times.

- It is unlawful for owners of motorboats or PWC to operate or allow anyone else to operate their motorboat or PWC while that person is intoxicated.
 - Indiana law defines intoxication as having a blood alcohol level of 0.08% or greater, or being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs such that a person's thoughts and actions are impaired and he or she has a loss of normal control of faculties to such an extent as to cause danger to others.
 - You also may be arrested if your blood alcohol level is less than 0.08% but over 0.05%.
- Indiana law establishes the following penalties.
 - If arrested and convicted of boating while intoxicated, you will face the penalties of a Class C misdemeanor. In addition, if this is your first offense or the first in 10 years, you may lose all your driving privileges (motorboat and motor vehicle) for at least 90 days and up to two years.
 - For a second conviction within five years, you may be fined, jailed, and lose the privilege to operate a vehicle, motorboat, or PWC for one to two years. More severe penalties exist for additional convictions.
 - A person boating while intoxicated who causes the death or serious injury of another person will, upon conviction, be guilty of a felony.

- By operating a motorboat or PWC on Indiana waters, you have consented to be tested for alcohol or drugs if requested by a law enforcement official. If you refuse to be tested, you will be subject to arrest and punishment consistent with the penalties described on the previous page and lose your privilege to operate a motorboat, PWC, or a motor vehicle.



Just remember this simple rule: ***Don't Drink and Boat!***

Accidents and Casualties

IC 14-15-4-1

Duties of operators

Sec. 1. The operator of a boat involved in an accident or a collision resulting in injury to or death of a person or damage to a boat or other property shall do the following:

1. Stop the boat immediately and as close as possible to the scene of the accident.
2. Return to the scene of the accident and remain there until the operator has complied with this section.
3. Give:
 - A. the operator's name and address;
 - B. a full identification of the boat operated; and
 - C. the name and address of the owner;

to the operator of each other boat and each person injured.

4. Upon request, exhibit the operator's license to the operator of each other boat and each person injured.
5. Provide reasonable assistance to each person injured, including carrying or arranging for carrying each injured person to a physician, surgeon, or hospital for medical or surgical treatment if:
 - A. it is apparent that treatment is necessary; or
 - B. the injured person so requests.

IC 14-15-4-2

Notice; reports

Sec. 2. (a) The operator of a boat involved in an accident or a collision resulting in:

1. injury to or death of a person; or
2. damage to a boat or other property to an apparent extent of at least seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750);

shall provide the information required under subsection (b).

(b) An operator of a boat subject to subsection (a) shall do the following:

1. Give notice of the accident to:
 - A. the office of the sheriff of the county;
 - B. the nearest state police post; or
 - C. the central dispatch center for the law enforcement division of the department;

immediately and by the quickest means of communication.

2. Mail to the department a written report of the accident or collision within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident or collision.

IC 14-15-4-3**Duties of other occupants**

Sec. 3. (a) If the operator of a boat is physically incapable of performing a duty imposed by sections 1 and 2 of this chapter, each other occupant of the boat shall perform the duty or see that the duty is performed.

(b) If a person to whom the operator of a boat is required to furnish information under section 1 of this chapter is physically incapable of receiving the information, the operator shall furnish the information to another occupant of the same boat.

IC 14-15-4-4**Violations**

Sec. 4. A person who knowingly or intentionally violates section 1, 2, or 3 of this chapter commits a Class C misdemeanor.

However, the offense is:

1. a Class A misdemeanor if the accident or collision results in an injury to a person;
2. a Level 6 felony if:
 - A. the accident or collision results in serious bodily injury to a person; or
 - B. within the five (5) years preceding the commission of the offense, the person had a previous conviction of any of the offenses listed in IC 9-30-10-4(a), IC 35-46-9-6, or IC 14-15-8-8 (before its repeal); or
3. a Level 5 felony if the accident or collision results in the death of a person.

- Vessel operators involved in a boating accident must stop and remain at the scene to give assistance, including ensuring that any injured person involved in the accident receives medical treatment.
- Operators involved in an accident must give his or her name and address, vessel registration number, and the name and address of the vessel's owner to operators of other vessels and any person injured in the accident.
- Operators must report the accident. A boating accident includes but is not limited to capsizing, collision, foundering, flooding, fire, explosion, and the disappearance of a boat other than by theft.
- The operator must file an accident report form supplied by the Indiana DNR if:
 - A person dies or disappears *or...*
 - A person is injured or requires medical treatment *or...*
 - Damage to the vessel and other property exceeds \$750.
- Failure to report a boating accident or collision that results in an injury to a person is a Class A misdemeanor. If the accident or collision results in serious bodily injury or death of a person, the offense is a felony.
- You must notify the office of the county sheriff, the nearest state police post, or the central dispatch center for the law enforcement division of the department as quickly as possible.
- Your written report must be made within 24 hours of the accident.

Discharge of Trash

IC 14-15-2-8

Littering

Sec. 8. (a) As used in this section, "litter" means bottles, glass, crockery, cans, scrap metal, junk, paper, garbage, rubbish, plastic, or similar refuse.

(b) In the operation or use of watercraft, a person may not throw, dump, place, deposit, or cause or permit to be thrown, dumped, placed, or deposited:

1. any litter, filth, or putrid or unwholesome substance; or
2. the contents of a water closet or toilet, catch basin, or grease trap;

in or upon public water or the banks of public water.

It is illegal to dump refuse, garbage, or plastics into any state or federally controlled waters. Many forms of litter can kill birds, fish, and marine mammals.

- 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 that is at least 4 x 9 inches and notifies passengers and crew about discharge restrictions.

Discharge of Sewage and Waste

IC 14-15-2-7

Holding tanks; sewage disposal

Sec. 7. (a) As used in this section, “sewage” means human body wastes.

(b) A person may not keep, maintain, or operate upon public water a boat that is equipped with a water closet or toilet unless the water closet or toilet is equipped with a holding tank with the capacity to store wastes for subsequent disposal at:

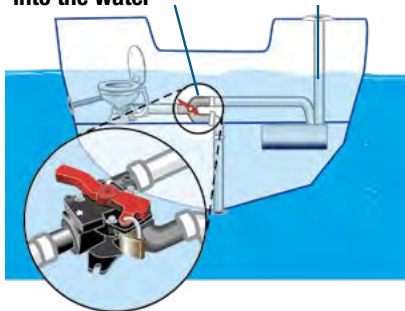
1. an approved shoreside facility or incinerator; or
2. a treatment system approved by the department of environmental management according to rules adopted by the environmental rules board.

(c) A person may not dispose of sewage accumulated in a holding tank or any other container on a watercraft in a manner that the sewage reaches or may reach public waters, except through a sewage disposal facility approved by the department of environmental management according to rules adopted by the environmental rules board.

- It is illegal to discharge untreated waste into any state or federally controlled waters.
- If you have a recreational boat with installed toilet facilities, it must have an operable marine sanitation device (MSD) on board.
- All installed devices must be USCG certified and working properly.
- A USCG–approved Type I or II MSD can be operated lawfully on a legally navigable waterway that is suitable for direct interstate boating transportation. A Non-Rule Policy Document listing of these waterways can be found at the Natural Resource Commission website at www.in.gov/nrc/nonrule-policy-documents-npd/.

Y valve must be secured so that waste cannot be discharged into the water

Drainage to pump-out station



Typical Marine Sanitation Device

Types of MSDs

There are three types of MSDs.

- Types I and II MSDs treat waste with special chemicals to kill bacteria. Types I and II MSDs with Y valves that direct the waste overboard must be secured by placing a lock or non-reusable seal on the Y valve or by taking the handle off the Y valve.
- Type III MSDs consist of holding tanks or portable toilets. Waste is discharged on shore into a pump out facility.

Discharge of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances

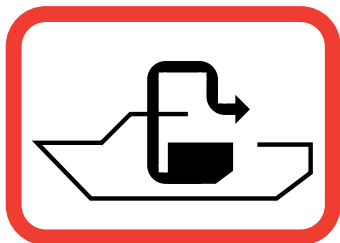
- It is illegal to discharge oil or hazardous substances.
- You are not allowed to dump oil into the bilge of the vessel without means for proper disposal.
- You must dispose of oil waste at an approved reception facility. On recreational boats, a bucket or bailer is adequate.
- If boating on federally controlled waters and your boat is 26 feet or longer, you must display a 5 x 8-inch placard near the bilge pump switch stating the Federal Water Pollution Control Act's law.

If your vessel discharges oil or hazardous substances into the water:

- Immediately call the National Response Center at **1-800-424-8802**.
- Also notify the Indiana Department of Environmental Management by calling **1-888-233-7745** or **1-800-TIP-IDNR**.



A list of pump-out locations is given toward the end of this handbook.



Specifically for PWC

PWC operators must adhere to additional legal requirements that apply specifically to the operation of PWC on Indiana waters.

Requirements Specific to PWC

IC 14-15-12-1

“Individual” defined

Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, “individual” means an individual human being.

IC 14-15-12-2/ IC 14-8-2-202 (a)

“Person” defined

Sec. 202. (a) “Person” means, except as provided in subsections (b) through (j), an individual, a partnership, an association, a fiduciary, an executor or administrator, a limited liability company, or a corporation.

IC 14-15-12-3/ IC 14-8-2-202.5

“Personal watercraft” defined

Sec. 202.5. “Personal watercraft”, for purposes of IC 14-15, means a watercraft:

1. whose primary source of motive power is an inboard motor powering a water jet pump; and
2. that is designed to be operated by a person who sits, stands, or kneels on the surface of the watercraft rather than sitting or standing inside the watercraft.

IC 14-15-12-4/ IC 14-8-2-226

“Public waters”

Sec. 226. “Public waters”, for purposes of IC 14-15, means every lake, river, stream, canal, ditch, and body of water that is:

1. subject to the jurisdiction of the state; or
2. owned or controlled by a public utility.

IC 14-15-12-5**Additional requirements and prohibitions**

Sec. 5. The requirements and prohibitions set forth in this chapter concerning personal watercraft are in addition to the requirements and prohibitions set forth in IC 14-15-3, IC 35-46-9, and IC 14-15-8 (before its repeal).

IC 14-15-12-6**Operation while facing rear prohibited**

Sec. 6. A person shall not operate a personal watercraft on public waters while facing the rear of the personal watercraft.

IC 14-15-12-7**Restrictions on water activities**

Sec. 7. A personal watercraft shall not be used on public waters to tow individuals engaged in waterskiing, aquaplaning, or similar activities, unless:

1. the personal watercraft is at least nine (9) feet long;
2. the personal watercraft is designed to seat at least three (3) individuals;
3. an individual other than the operator of the personal watercraft is aboard the personal watercraft, acting as an observer; and
4. the total number of persons on the watercraft and being towed is not more than the capacity of the watercraft.

IC 14-15-12-8**Personal flotation devices**

Sec. 8. A person shall not operate a personal watercraft on public waters unless every individual:

1. operating;
2. riding on; or
3. being towed by;

the personal watercraft is wearing a personal flotation device that meets the requirements for designation by the United States Coast Guard as a wearable personal flotation device, if applicable.

IC 14-15-12-9**Self-circling capability**

Sec. 9. A personal watercraft that does not have self-circling capability shall not be operated on public waters unless:

1. the personal watercraft is equipped with a lanyard type engine cutoff switch; and
2. the lanyard is attached to the person, clothing, or personal flotation device of the operator.

IC 14-15-12-10**Reasonable and prudent operation**

Sec. 10. (a) A personal watercraft operated on public waters must at all times be operated in a reasonable and prudent manner.

(b) A person shall not operate a personal watercraft on public waters in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.

(c) A person shall not do any of the following while operating a personal watercraft on public waters:

1. Weave through congested watercraft traffic in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.
2. Follow a watercraft that is towing an individual on:
 - A. water skis;
 - B. a surf board; or
 - C. another water sport device;in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.
3. Jump the wake of another watercraft in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.
4. Cut between a boat and the individual or individuals being towed by the boat.
5. Cross paths with another watercraft when visibility around the other watercraft is so obstructed as to endanger human life, human physical safety, or property.
6. Steer a personal watercraft toward an object or individual in the water and turn sharply at close range in a way that endangers human life, human physical safety, or property.

IC 14-15-12-11**Unlawful authorization to operate watercraft**

Sec. 11. A person who:

1. owns a personal watercraft; or
2. has charge over or control of a personal watercraft;

shall not authorize or knowingly permit the personal watercraft to be operated in violation of this chapter.

IC 14-15-12-12**Nonapplicability**

Sec. 12. Sections 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of this chapter do not apply to:

1. a performer engaged in a professional exhibition; or
2. a person participating in a regatta, a race, a marine parade, a tournament, or an exhibit;

that is held in compliance with rules adopted by the natural resources commission.

IC 14-15-12-13**Violations**

Sec. 13. (a) A person who intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly violates section 10 of this chapter commits a Class C misdemeanor.

(b) A person who violates section 6, 7, 8, 9, or 11 of this chapter commits a Class C infraction.

- Each person riding on or being towed behind a PWC must *wear* a USCG–approved wearable PFD. Recommended are PFDs designed to withstand the impact of hitting the water at high speed.
- PWC must either be equipped with an engine cut-off switch (ECOS) or have a self-circling feature in case the operator falls off. An operator of a PWC equipped with a lanyard-type ECOS must always attach the lanyard to his or her person, clothing, or PFD.
- PWC may be operated during daylight hours only unless equipped with the appropriate lighting.
- It is illegal to operate a PWC while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- You must operate a PWC in a reasonable and prudent manner. It is illegal to endanger human life, safety, or property. You may not:
 - Weave through congested traffic.*
 - Follow a vessel that is towing other individuals.*
 - Jump the wake of another vessel.*
 - Cut between a vessel and an individual being towed.*
 - Cross paths with another vessel when vision is obstructed.*
 - Steer toward an object or person in the water and turn sharply at close range.*
 - Operate while facing backward.

*Should you be ticketed by an enforcement officer for one of these crimes, you could have points assessed against your driver's license (**140 IAC 1-4.5-10**).

Specifically for Skiing

Requirements for Towing Skiers

IC 14-15-3-20

Towing of persons or objects

Sec. 20. A person operating a motorboat may not tow a water ski, a watersled, an aquaplane, or a similar object, including a person on the waterski, watersled, aquaplane, or similar object, unless:

1. the motorboat is occupied by at least one (1) other person who is giving the person's entire attention to watching the object or person towed; and
2. the person operating the boat is giving the person's entire attention to the operation of the boat.

IC 14-15-12-7

Restrictions on water activities

Sec. 7. A personal watercraft shall not be used on public waters to tow individuals engaged in waterskiing, aquaplaning, or similar activities, unless:

1. the personal watercraft is at least nine (9) feet long;
2. the personal watercraft is designed to seat at least three (3) individuals;
3. an individual other than the operator of the personal watercraft is aboard the personal watercraft, acting as an observer; and
4. the total number of persons on the watercraft and being towed is not more than the capacity of the watercraft.

- Every boat or PWC towing a person(s) on water skis, an aquaplane, or a similar device must have a person on board, in addition to the operator, observing the towed person(s) at all times.
- If towing a person behind a PWC, the PWC must be at least nine (9) feet in length and must be rated for at least three (3) people—the operator, the observer, and the retrieved skier. The total number of people on the PWC and being towed should not be more than the capacity of the watercraft.
- It is illegal to swim or float while holding onto any portion of the swim deck, swim platform, swim step, or any other portion of the exterior of the transom behind a motorboat that is underway at any speed.
- It is illegal to operate a vessel powered with an outboard motor or equipped with an outdrive while an individual is floating on a board on or in the wake directly behind a motorboat that is underway using the wake itself as the means of propulsion.

Water-Skiing/Tubing on the Ohio River 312 IAC 5-13-5

Several laws for water-skiing and tubing on the Ohio River differ from those of other Indiana waterways.

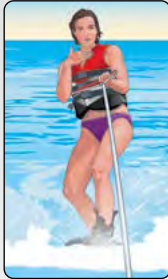
- The operator of the towing vessel may have either an observer on board or use a rearview mirror.
 - If an observer is used, he or she must be at least 12 years of age.
 - If a rearview mirror is used, the mirror must have at least a 160-degree-wide angle of vision and be mounted so that the operator can see the person being towed.
 - A mirror is not allowed if towing a kite. There must be an observer at least 12 years of age on board.
- The hours are extended to one (1) hour before sunrise to one (1) hour after sunset.
- Anyone being towed on water skis, a surfboard, a kite, or similar device should *wear* a USCG–approved PFD.

Hand Signals for Skiers

Knowing proper hand signals will help the skier(s) communicate with their boat operator or the observer.



Skier OK



Stop



Skier down—watch!



Speed up



Slow down



Speed OK



Turn left



Turn right

Lake & River Enhancement Program (LARE)

- The Indiana Department of Natural Resource's Lake and River Enhancement Program (LARE) was developed in 1989 to ensure the continued viability of public-access lakes and streams. The program's initial goal was to utilize a watershed approach to reduce non-point source sediment and nutrient pollution of Indiana's surface water to a level that meets or surpasses state water quality standards.
- The 2003 Indiana General Assembly enacted House Enrolled Act 1336 which increased the LARE fee paid by registered vessel owners. The increase in fees provides funding to remove sediment and control exotic or invasive plant or animal species.
- In addition, one-third of these fees will provide funding for the Law Enforcement Division to establish additional marine enforcement patrols on Indiana lakes and rivers. A portion of these funds also may be available for counties with supplemental law enforcement marine patrols.
- The LARE fee is based on the value of the vessel when new.

Value of the Vessel

Fee

Less than \$1000.....	\$5.00
At least \$1000, but less than \$3000.....	\$10.00
At least \$3000, but less than \$5000.....	\$15.00
At least \$5000, but less than \$10,000	\$20.00
At least \$10,000.....	\$25.00

Indiana Boat Sewage Pump-Out Locations

B & E Marine
219-879-8301

Blue River Marina
812-926-0830

Brookville Lake IDNR
765-647-2657

Lake Wawasee
**DNR, Lake Wawasee
Family Recreation Area**
574-834-4461

**East Chicago
Municipal Marina**
219-391-8482

Monroe Reservoir
Fourwinds Marina
1-800-824-BOAT

**Hammond Municipal
Marina**
219-659-7678

Patoka Lake
Hoosier Hills Marina
812-678-3313

Inland Marina
812-422-8180

Kent's Harbor Marina
765-458-7431

**Lake Monroe Sailing
Assoc.**
812-824-4611

Lefty's Coho Landing
219-762-7761

Cagles Mill Lake
**Lieber State Recreation
Area**
765-795-4576

Ohio River
**Lighthouse Point Yacht
Club, Inc.**
via Laughery Creek
812-926-4505

Marquette Yacht Club
219-762-9961

Lake Michigan
**Michigan City Port
Authority**
219-872-1712

**Miller Chapter IWLA
Marina**
219-762-9974

New Plaza Yacht Club
812-483-2536

Lake Lemon
North Shore Marina
812-988-4663

Patoka Station Marina
812-685-2203

**Paynetown State
Recreation Area**
812-837-9546

Salamonie Reservoir
**Pirate's Cove Marina,
Inc.**
260-468-2162

**Portage Public Marina
Management**
219-763-6833

Brookville Lake
Quakertown Marina
765-458-6490

Cecil M. Harden Lake
**Raccoon State
Recreation Area**
765-344-1412

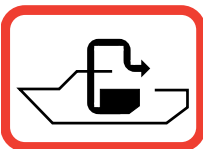
Mississinewa Lake
Red Bridge Marina
317-395-7176

Rivercrest Marina
812-265-5285

South Shore Marina
219-762-2304

Tradewinds Marina
812-926-0341

Turtle Creek Harbor
812-594-2387





Boating Checklist

- ✓ Is the motorboat properly registered, and are the proper numbers and decals displayed?

- ✓ Do you have the required number of personal flotation devices (PFDs), and are they in good condition?

- ✓ Is the total load, including passengers and gear, within the vessel's capacity rating?

- ✓ Has an equipment check been done, including fuel and lights?

- ✓ Have plans been made to handle any emergency, such as weather, mechanical breakdown, or injuries, that may arise?

- ✓ Are you aware of local operating conditions, including navigational hazards, locks, dams, currents, rules of the road, etc.?

Required Equipment Checklist



	PWC	Boat Less Than 16 Ft.	Boat 16 Ft. to Less Than 26 Ft.
Boating Safety Education Certificate on Board	✓ 1	✓ 1	✓ 1
Certificate of Registration on Board	✓	✓	✓
Excise Tax Decals Displayed	✓	✓	✓
Wearable PFDs	✓ 2	✓	✓
Throwable Devices			✓ 3
ECOS	✓ 4		
Type 5-B Fire Extinguisher	✓ 5	✓ 5	✓ 5
Backfire Flame Arrestor	✓	✓ 6	✓ 6
Ventilation System	✓	✓	✓
Muffler	✓	✓	✓
Horn, Whistle, or Bell	✓ 5	✓ 5	✓
Daytime VDSs			✓ 5
Nighttime VDSs	✓ 5,7	✓ 5	✓ 5
Navigation Lights	✓ 7	✓	✓

1. Required for operators who do not have a vehicle driver's license when operating motorboats or PWC.
2. Those on PWC must *wear* a PFD at all times.
3. Canoes and kayaks are excepted.
4. PWC must either be equipped with an ECOS or have a self-circling feature. If equipped with an ECOS, the lanyard must be attached to the person, clothing, or PFD of the operator.
5. Required when boating on "Waters of Concurrent Jurisdiction."
6. Required on gasoline-powered inboards and stern drives only.
7. It is strongly recommended that PWC be operated during daylight hours only. However, if operated at night, a PWC has the same requirements for VDSs and navigation lights as boats less than 16 feet in length.



Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Law Enforcement Offices

District 1 Headquarters

9822 N. Turkey Creek Rd.
Syracuse, IN 46567
574-457-8092
icodist1@dnr.IN.gov

District 2 Headquarters

1353 S. Governors Dr.
Columbia City, IN 46725
260-244-3720
icodist2@dnr.IN.gov

District 3 Headquarters

4112 E. State Rd. 225
West Lafayette, IN 47906
765-567-7859
icodist3@dnr.IN.gov

District 4 Headquarters

3734 Mounds Rd.
Anderson, IN 46017
765-649-1062
icodist4@dnr.IN.gov

District 5 Headquarters

1317 W. Lieber Rd.,
Suite 2
Cloverdale, IN 46120
765-276-0196
icodist5@dnr.IN.gov

District 6 Headquarters

7937 Durbin St. Bldg. 9A
Edinburgh, IN 46124
P.O. Box 282
Nineveh, IN 46164
812-526-4101
icodist6@dnr.IN.gov

District 7 Headquarters

2310 E. State Rd. 364
Winslow, IN 47598
812-789-9538
icodist7@dnr.IN.gov

District 8 Headquarters

1504 Schlamm Lake Rd.
P.O. Box 330
Henryville, IN 47126
812-639-4148
icodist8@dnr.IN.gov

District 9 Headquarters

1387 E. US Hwy. 50
Versailles, IN 47042
812-689-4370
icodist9@dnr.IN.gov

District 10 Headquarters

100 W. Water St.
Michigan City, IN 46360
219-879-5710
icodist10@dnr.IN.gov

Central Dispatch Center

4850 S. State Rd. 446
Bloomington, IN 47401
812-837-9536
icodispatch@dnr.IN.gov

Turn In Poachers (TIP) Hotline

1-800-847-4367



Go online for information about:

- ◆ State parks and reservoirs
- ◆ Boater and snow-mobile education courses
- ◆ Hunter education courses
- ◆ ICOO Youth Camp
- ◆ Boating laws
- ◆ Recreation Guide
- ◆ Lake Michigan
- ◆ TIP (Turn in a Poacher/Polluter)
- ◆ DNR's Law Enforcement Division
- ◆ DNR telephone numbers
- ◆ Division of Fish & Wildlife

Visit www.in.gov/dnr

Everything you need to know about boating in Indiana is just a click away!

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