

10 Common Marine Law Violations

1. All watercraft shall be equipped with a Coast Guard approved PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE (PFD) of appropriate size for each passenger. This includes non-motorized boats, kayaks and paddleboards. Boats over 16' are required to have a Coast Guard approved wearable PFD for each person and one additional type IV throw-able device. All PWC(Jet Ski) occupants are required to wear PFDs. Children under the age of 6 must wear a type I or II PFD while riding on an open deck of a vessel. Check the printed Coast Guard information on each jacket.
2. Vessels are required to operate at a slow, no wake speed within 100 feet from any raft, dock, occupied swim area, anchored or moored vessels, or persons in the water. This does not mean prohibited from operating in these areas. It means operating a speed slow enough to not produce any wake behind the boat. The speed limit for an inland lake is 55mph maximum unless otherwise posted and if there is reduced visibility or congested areas.
3. Watercraft shall travel in a counter-clockwise direction on the lake when traveling the shoreline.
4. An operator of a vessel shall not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
5. Occupants of a vessel shall not sit or stand in an area not build to be stood or sat upon while the boat is under way, i.e. seatbacks, decks, bow and gunwales.
6. Watercraft must have proper lighting from sunset to sunrise and during periods of restricted visibility.
7. A Personal Watercraft (PWC) may be operated during the hours between 8:00 AM until sunset.
8. Persons born after December 31, 1978 must have a Boaters Safety Certificate when operating a PWC. The minimum age for operating a PWC is 14 with a parent or 16 without a parent. Those born after July 1, 1996 must have a Boater's Safety Certificate to operate any motorized vessel over 6 HP on Michigan waterways.
9. A PWC may not jump the wake of another non PWC watercraft within 150 feet of the boat's stern unless at a slow, no wake, speed. PWC hours of operation is from 8am until sunset.
10. Water skiing is legal 1 hour before sunrise until 1 hour after sunset with a boat. An observer other than the operator of the vessel is required.

For further information contact the Barry County Sheriff's Office or visit <https://www.boat-ed.com/michigan/handbook/book.html>