

the
HANDBOOK!
OF ARKANSAS
BOATING LAWS
AND
RESPONSIBILITIES

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2017 Edition

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the **HANDBOOK!** **OF** **ARKANSAS** **BOATING LAWS** **AND** **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Published by Boat Ed®, a division of Kalkomey Enterprises, LLC, 14086 Proton Road, Dallas, TX 75244, 214-351-0461. Printed in the U.S.A.

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Stay up to date of new boating laws...

- Call the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission:
501-223-6379
or visit our website at:
www.agfc.com
- For federal boating laws, visit the U.S. Coast Guard's
boating safety website:
www.uscgboating.org
- Be sure to stay abreast of educational requirements and
course options by calling the Arkansas Game & Fish
Commission:
501-223-6377

Information in this handbook does not replace what is specifically legal for boating in Arkansas, which is found in the Arkansas Code and federal laws.

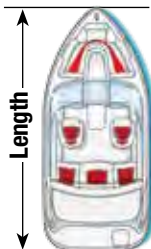
Before Going Out

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

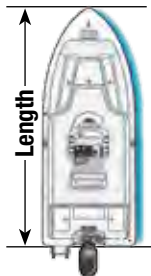
Vessel Length Classes

- 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

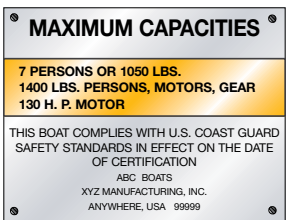


Outboards



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/or maximum number of people that the vessel can carry safely. It also indicates the maximum horsepower.



- PWCs 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.

The most important safe fueling practice...

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

■ After fueling:

- Wipe up any spilled fuel.
- Open all windows, ports, doors, and other openings.

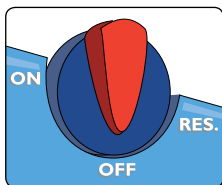
Additional Safety Procedures for PWCs

- 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.
- 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 assure 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 ignition safety switch 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 Arkansas waterways is everyone's responsibility. All operators are equally responsible for taking action to avoid collisions.

Encountering Other Vessels

Even though no vessel has the "right-of-way" over another vessel, there are some rules that every operator should follow when encountering other vessels. It is the responsibility of both operators to take the action needed to avoid a collision. The next page shows what to do when encountering another vessel.

To prevent collisions, every operator should follow the three basic rules of navigation.

- ◆ Practice good seamanship.
- ◆ Keep a sharp lookout.
- ◆ Maintain a safe speed and distance.

Encountering Vessels With Limited Maneuverability

- When operating a power-driven vessel, you must give way to:
 - Any vessel not under command, such as an anchored or disabled vessel
 - Any vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver, such as a vessel towing another or laying cable, or one constrained by its draft, such as a large ship in a channel
 - A vessel engaged in commercial fishing
 - A sailboat under sail unless it is overtaking
- When operating a vessel under sail, you must give way to:
 - Any vessel not under command
 - Any vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver
 - A vessel engaged in commercial fishing

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

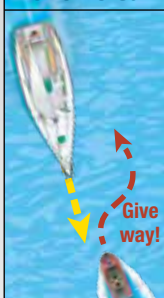


Meeting Head-On

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.

Power vs. Sail



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.

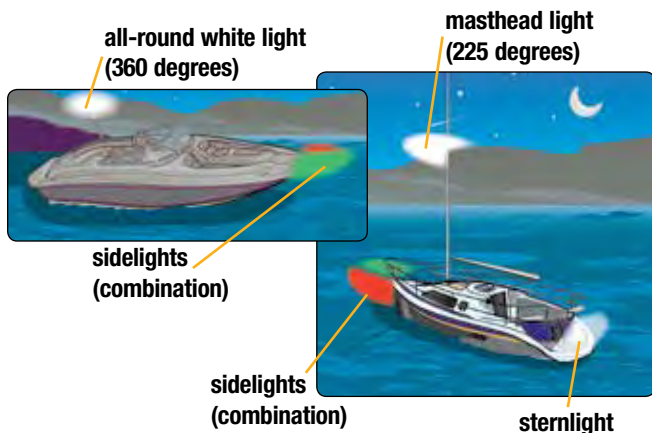
Power vs. Sail: The vessel that is overtaking another vessel is the give-way vessel. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on vessel.



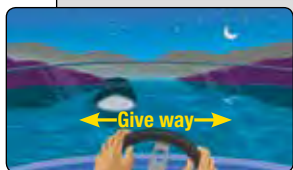
Nighttime Navigation

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.

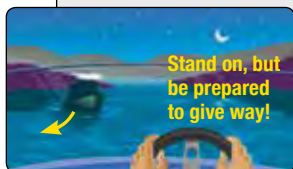
- **Sidelights:** These red and green lights are called sidelights (also called combination lights) because they are visible to another vessel approaching from the side or head-on. The red light indicates a vessel's port (left) side; the green indicates a vessel's starboard (right) side.
- **Sternlight:** 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.



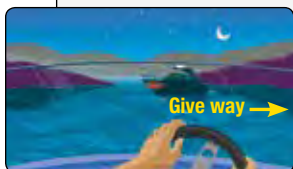
Encountering Vessels at Night



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.



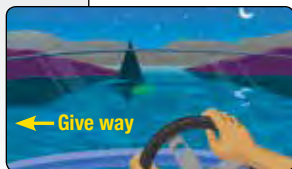
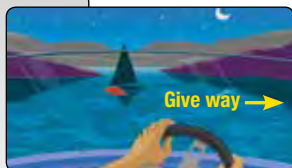
When you see a green and a white light, you are the stand-on vessel. However, remain alert in case the other vessel operator does not see you or does not know the navigation rules.



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!



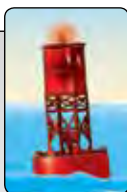
U.S. Aids to Navigation System (ATON)

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.

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.



open waters →



open waters →

Red Right Returning

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

Non-Lateral Markers

Non-lateral markers are navigation 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.

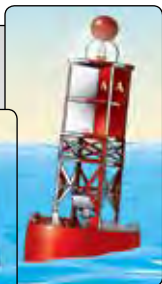
Other Non-Lateral Markers

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 listed on the next page.

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 USCG-approved life jacket (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. PWCs 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 U.S. Coast Guard 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 U.S. Coast Guard 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.”

Other Boating Emergencies

A safe boater knows how to prevent and respond to other boating emergencies.

Falling Overboard

■ To prevent persons from falling overboard:

- Don't sit on the gunwale, bow, seat backs, motor cover, or any other area not designed for seating.
- Don't sit on pedestal seats when underway at greater than idle speed.
- Don't stand up in or lean out from the boat.
- Don't move about the boat when underway.

■ If someone on your boat falls overboard:

- Reduce speed and toss the victim a throwable PFD.
- Turn your boat around and slowly pull alongside the victim, approaching the victim from downwind or into the current, whichever is stronger.
- Turn off the engine. Pull the victim on board over the stern, keeping the weight in the boat balanced.

Capsizing or Swamping

■ To reduce the risk of capsizing or swamping:

- Don't overload your boat. Balance the load.
- Slow your boat appropriately when turning.
- Secure the anchor line to the bow, never to the stern.
- Don't boat in rough water or in bad weather.

■ If you capsize or swamp your boat, or if you have fallen overboard and can't get back in:

- Stay with the boat.
- Try to reboard or climb onto it in order to get as much of your body out of the cold water as possible.

■ If the boat sinks or floats away, don't panic.

- If wearing a PFD, remain calm and await help.
- If you aren't wearing a PFD, look around for one or for other buoyant items to use as a flotation device.
- In cold water, float rather than tread.

Hypothermia

■ If you are boating in cold water:

- Dress in several layers of clothing under your PFD or wear a wetsuit or drysuit.
- Learn to recognize the symptoms of hypothermia. Symptoms begin with shivering and bluish lips and nails, and progress to a coma and, ultimately, death.

■ To reduce the effects of hypothermia:

- Put on a PFD if not wearing one. It helps you to float without excessive movement and insulates your body.
- Get as much of your body out of the water as possible.
- Don't take your clothes off unless necessary—clothes can help you float and provide insulation.
- Don't thrash or move about. Excess motion consumes energy and increases loss of body heat.
- Draw your knees to your chest and your arms to your sides, protecting the major areas of heat loss.
- If others are in the water with you, huddle together with your arms around their shoulders.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, tasteless gas that can be deadly. To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, keep air flowing through the boat and take extreme caution when running a generator at a dock or at anchor.

- Whenever people are using a swim platform or are in the water close to the stern, turn off all gasoline-powered generators with transom exhaust ports.
- Swimmers should never enter the cavity between the swim platform and the stern of the boat.
- When boating, be careful running downwind as exhaust gases may blow back on board. On cabin cruisers, be aware that exhaust gases can blow back into the stern when traveling into the wind.



Specifically for PWCs

Although a personal watercraft (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 control



steering nozzle

Steering and Stopping a PWC

- PWCs 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 PWCs 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 PWCs will continue in the direction they were headed before the engine was shut off, no matter which way the steering control is turned. New PWCs allow for off-throttle steering.

- **Most PWCs 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 PWCs that have a braking system do not stop immediately.

Ignition Safety Switches

- Most PWCs and powerboats come equipped by the manufacturer with an important device called an emergency ignition safety switch. This is a safety device that is designed to shut off the engine if the operator is thrown from the proper operating position.
- A lanyard is attached to the safety switch and the operator's wrist or PFD. The safety 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 ignition safety switch, you should have one installed.
- In many states, it is illegal to ride your PWC without attaching the lanyard properly between the switch and yourself.



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 will 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 PWCs 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 personal watercraft, 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

- Remember that everyone on board a PWC must wear a USCG–approved personal flotation device (life jacket).
- 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 vessel operators are required to obey laws that regulate the vessel's registration and operation.

NOTE: Arkansas Code (law) defines **motorboat** to be any vessel operated upon water that is propelled by sail or machinery, whether or not the machinery is the principal source of propulsion.

Registering a Motorboat

- You must have an Arkansas Certificate of Number (registration) and validation decals to operate a motorboat on Arkansas public waters. The only exceptions are:
 - Vessels that are not propelled by an engine or by sail
 - Vessels properly registered in another state and using Arkansas waters for 90 or fewer consecutive days
 - Vessels documented by the U.S. Coast Guard

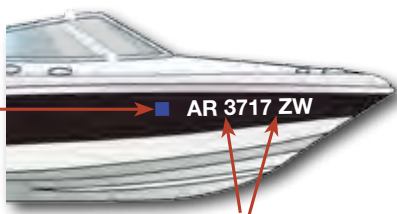
- *The Certificate of Number (pocket-sized registration card) must be on board and available for inspection by an enforcement officer whenever the motorboat is operated.*

- The registration number and validation decals must be displayed as follows.

- Number must be painted, applied as a decal, or otherwise affixed to the forward half of each side of the motorboat and placed to be clearly visible.
- Number must read from left to right on both sides of the motorboat.

ARKANSAS BOAT REGISTRATION			
REGISTRAR'S TEL:		OWNER'S NAME	
SMITH		JOHN Q	
100 ELM STREET		AR 72022-0000	
BRYANT			
SERIAL NO.	REG. NO.	EXPIRATION DATE	
AR78162W	09020060	03-31-2018	
HON.		YEAR	
SAB05417K596		1998	
NAME		REG. HPS.	
SEA AVE.		JOHNSON OUTBOARD	
MOTOR NO.	H.P.	FUEL	PROPULSION
09078308	115	G	OUTBOARD
VESSEL TYPE		USED FOR	HULL CONSTRUCTION
OPEN PLEASURE		RECREATION	METAL
LENGTH		REGISTRATION FEE	
20' 00"		\$4.00	
ISSUE DATE/TIME		12:04 A.M.	
03-20-2017			
OWNER'S SIGNATURE			

Validation Decal



**Spaces or hyphens
should appear here.**

- Number must be in at least three-inch-high, bold, **BLOCK** letters.
 - Number's color must contrast with its background.
 - Letters must be separated from the numbers by a space or hyphen: **AR 3717 ZW**, **AR-3717-ZW**, **AR 999 AZZ**, or **AR-999-AZZ**.
 - No other numbers may be displayed on either side of the bow.
 - Decals must be affixed on each side of the motorboat, toward the stern of the registration number, and three inches from and in line with the number.
- If your motorboat requires registration, it is illegal to operate it or allow others to operate your motorboat unless it is registered and numbered as described above.

How to Apply for Registration

Requests for registration require a completed application along with all of the other documentation shown below and the proper fee.

- Proof of ownership—current registration or bill of sale
- Proof of personal property assessment and proof of current paid taxes
- Proof of insurance
- Hull Identification Number Verification (photograph or pencil rubbing)

Note: Homemade vessels without a Hull Identification Number applying for new registration must be inspected first.

Fees to Register Your Motorboat

Registration of Motorboat (original or renewal)

Motorboat less than 16 ft. long.....	\$7.50
Motorboat 16 ft. to less than 26 ft. long.....	\$15.00
Motorboat 26 ft. to less than 40 ft. long.....	\$51.00
Motorboat 40 ft. long or longer	\$105.00

Other Facts About Registration

- The owner of a motorboat that requires registration must apply for the registration within 30 days of the date of purchase. The motorboat may be operated during this period if the owner has on board a dated proof of purchase.
- A Certificate of Number is valid for three years.
- If an outboard engine is purchased for a previously registered motorboat, the serial number of the engine must be provided to the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA).
- If ownership of a registered motorboat changes, the new owner must apply to the DFA for transfer of the registration within 30 days of the ownership change.
- If a registered motorboat is abandoned or destroyed, the owner must notify the DFA within 15 days of the event and the Certificate of Number will be terminated.
- If you lose or destroy your registration card or decals, you must apply for a duplicate and submit a processing fee.
- Larger recreational vessels owned by U.S. citizens may (at the option of the owner) be documented by the U.S. Coast Guard. Call the USCG at **1-800-799-8362** for more information. **Note: Documentation through the USCG does not relieve the owner of his or her responsibility to assess the motorboat for personal property taxes.**

Where to Register...

Registration application and renewal forms can be obtained from:

- The Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration *or...*
- County Revenue Offices. Boaters may register in their county of residence or the county of principal use.

You can submit your registration application, required documents, and fee to your County Revenue Office or to:
Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration
P.O. Box 1272
Little Rock, AR 72203

Liability Insurance Requirement

- All motorboats powered by engines of more than 50 horsepower, and all PWCs, must be covered by a liability insurance policy.
 - The policy must provide at least \$50,000 of liability coverage per occurrence.
 - It is illegal for the owner of such a vessel to operate it, or allow others to operate it, unless the vessel has the required insurance.
- Proof of insurance must be carried on board the vessel and be available for inspection by an enforcement officer.
- Registration applications for vessels requiring liability insurance must be accompanied by proof of the insurance policy.

Registration Questions? Call the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration at **1-800-662-8247** or **501-682-4692**. Also, you can call or visit your County Revenue Office, or visit the Department of Finance and Administration on the Internet at **www.arkansas.gov/dfa**.

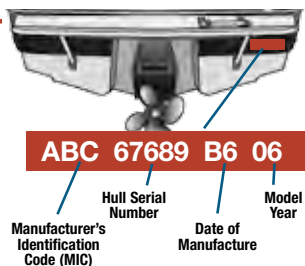


Hull Identification Number

The Hull Identification Number (HIN) is a unique, 12-digit number assigned by the manufacturer to vessels built after 1972.

■ Hull Identification Numbers:

- Distinguish one vessel from another.
- Are engraved in the fiberglass or on a metal plate permanently attached to the transom.



- Owners of homemade vessels that do not have an HIN may request an inspection by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, Boating Division by calling **501-223-6379**. Upon favorable inspection, an agent will assign your vessel an identification number.
- Under the Boat Identification Act, it is illegal to remove, cover, alter, mutilate, or destroy the HIN.

Who May Operate a Personal Watercraft (PWC)

A person under 16 years of age may not operate any personal watercraft that is not rated to carry at least two people. The following requirements also apply to operation of a PWC.

- **A person under 12 years of age** must have a person at least 21 years of age on board who must:
 - Satisfy the boating education requirement (see below) if born on or after January 1, 1986, *and...*
 - Be in a position to take immediate control of the PWC.
- **A person 12 through 15 years of age** must have a person at least 18 years of age on board who must:
 - Satisfy the boating education requirement (see below) if born on or after January 1, 1986, *and...*
 - Be in a position to take immediate control of the PWC.
- **A person 16 years of age or older** must satisfy the boating education requirement (see below) if born on or after January 1, 1986.
- It is illegal for the owner or person in control of a personal watercraft to allow someone who does not meet the age or boating education requirements to operate the PWC.
- A personal watercraft livery (rental agency) may not lease a PWC to a person under 18 years of age.

Who May Operate a Motorboat Other Than a PWC

The following requirements apply to operation of a motorboat powered by an engine of 10 horsepower or more.

- **A person under 12 years of age** must:
 - Satisfy the boating education requirement *and...*
 - Be under the direct visible and audible supervision of a parent, guardian, or person over 17 years of age.
- **A person 12 years of age or older** must satisfy the boating education requirement if born on or after January 1, 1986.
- It is illegal for the owner or person in control of a motorboat to allow someone who does not meet the age or boating education requirements to operate the vessel.

Boating Education Requirement

- To operate any motorboat (including a PWC) legally on Arkansas waters, a person who is of legal age to operate a vessel, whether an Arkansas resident or non-resident, and who is born on or after January 1, 1986, must have:
 - A boating education certificate showing successful completion of an approved Arkansas Game & Fish Commission (AGFC) safe boating course *or...*
 - A valid boating education certificate issued by another state from a boating education course that is approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA).
- *Proof of certification must be carried on board the vessel.*

Local Regulations

Local waterways may have specific equipment and operational restrictions in addition to those in this handbook. Check for local regulations before you go boating, especially if you are planning to boat in a water supply reservoir.

Enforcement

- The boating laws of Arkansas are enforced by AGFC enforcement officers, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, state police officers, Department of Parks and Tourism enforcement officers, municipal police officers, and the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Officers may legally stop and board your vessel in order to check for compliance with state and federal laws. You must follow the directive of a person with law enforcement authority.

Required Equipment

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

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

- All vessels must have at least one USCG–approved wearable PFD (life jacket) for each person on board.
- In addition to the above requirement, one USCG–approved throwable PFD must be on board vessels 16 feet or longer.
- Children 12 years old and younger must *wear* a USCG–approved PFD *securely fastened* to their persons at all times while on any vessel. The only exception is if the child is within the enclosed area of a houseboat or cruiser, or within the area enclosed by railings on a party barge, cruiser, or houseboat, *and* the vessel is *not* underway.
- Each person on board a PWC must *wear* a USCG–approved PFD. Inflatable PFDs are *not* approved for use on PWCs.
- Each person being towed behind a motorized vessel on water skis, an aquaplane, or other device must *wear* a USCG–approved PFD.
- Besides being U.S. Coast Guard–approved, all PFDs must be:
 - *In good and serviceable condition.*
 - *Readily accessible*, which means you are able to put the PFD on quickly in an emergency.
 - *Of the proper size for the intended wearer.* Sizing for PFDs is based on body weight and chest size.



Wearable: Offshore Life Jackets

These vests are geared for rough or remote waters where rescue may take awhile. They provide the most buoyancy, are excellent for flotation, and will turn most unconscious persons face up in the water.



Wearable: Near-Shore Vests

These vests are good for calm waters when quick rescue is likely. A Near-Shore Vest may not turn some unconscious wearers face up in the water.



Wearable: Flotation Aids

These vests or full-sleeved jackets are good for calm waters when quick rescue is likely. They are not recommended for rough waters since they will not turn most unconscious persons face up.



Throwable Devices

These cushions and ring buoys are designed to be thrown to someone in trouble. Since a throwable PFD is not designed to be worn, it is neither for rough waters nor for persons who are unable to hold onto it.



Wearable: Special-Use Devices

These vests, deck suits, hybrid PFDs, and others are designed for specific activities such as windsurfing, kayaking, or water-skiing. *To be acceptable, Special-Use PFDs must be used in accordance with their label.*

Navigation Lights

The required navigation lights must be displayed between sunset and sunrise and during periods of restricted visibility. On Arkansas state waters, all motorboats must have lighting sufficient to make their presence and location known to any other vessels. On federal waters, the following requirements apply.

Power-Driven Vessels When Underway

If less than 65.6 feet long, these vessels must exhibit the lights as shown in illustration 1. Remember, power-driven vessels include sailboats operating under engine power. The required lights are:

- Red and green sidelights visible from a distance of at least two miles away—or if less than 39.4 feet long, at least one mile away—on a dark, clear night.
- An all-round white light or both a masthead light and a sternlight. These lights must be visible from a distance of at least two miles away on a dark, clear night. The all-round white light (or the masthead light) must be at least 3.3 feet higher than the sidelights.

Unpowered Vessels When Underway

Unpowered vessels are sailboats or vessels that are paddled, poled, or rowed.

- **If less than 65.6 feet long**, these vessels must exhibit the lights as shown in illustration 2. The required lights are:
 - Red and green sidelights visible from at least two miles away—or if less than 39.4 feet long, at least one mile away.
 - A sternlight visible from at least two miles away.
- **If less than 23.0 feet long**, these vessels should:
 - If practical, exhibit the same lights as required for unpowered vessels less than 65.6 feet in length.
 - If not practical, have on hand at least one lantern or flashlight shining a white light as in illustration 3.

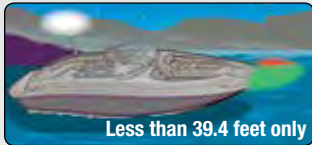
All Vessels When Not Underway

All vessels are required to display a white light visible in all directions whenever they are moored or anchored outside a designated mooring area between sunset and sunrise.

1. Power-Driven Vessels Less Than 65.6 Feet



The masthead light and sternlight may be combined as an all-round white light on vessels less than 39.4 feet long.

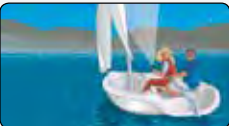


2. Unpowered Vessels Less Than 65.6 Feet



An alternative to the sidelights and sternlight is a combination red, green, and white light, which must be exhibited near the top of the mast.

3. Unpowered Vessels Less Than 23.0 Feet



Vessel operators should never leave shore without a flashlight. Even if you plan to return before dark, unforeseen developments might delay your return past nightfall.

Fire Extinguishers

- All vessels are required to have a Type B fire extinguisher on board if one or more of the following conditions exist:
 - Inboard engine
 - Closed compartments where portable fuel tanks may be stored or in which flammable or combustible materials may be stored
 - Permanently installed fuel tanks
- Type B fires are of flammable liquids like gasoline or oil.
- 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.
- Extinguishers should be placed in an accessible area—not near the engine or in a compartment, but where they can be reached immediately. Be sure you know how to operate them, and inspect extinguishers regularly to ensure they are in working condition and fully charged.

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

Fire Extinguisher Requirements

Classification type & size	Foam minimum gallons	Carbon Dioxide minimum pounds	Dry Chemical minimum pounds
B-I	1¼	4	2
B-II	2½	15	10
Length of Vessel	Without Fixed System		With Fixed System*
Less than 26 ft.	one B-I		None
26 ft. to less than 40 ft.	two B-I or one B-II		one B-I
40 ft. to less than 65 ft.	three B-I or one B-II and one B-I		two B-I or one B-II

* refers to a permanently installed fire extinguisher system

Ventilation Systems

The purpose of ventilation systems is to avoid explosions by removing flammable gases. Properly installed ventilation systems greatly reduce the chance of a life-threatening explosion.



- All gasoline-powered vessels, constructed in a way that would entrap fumes, must have at least two ventilation ducts fitted with cowls to remove the fumes.
- If your vessel is equipped with a power ventilation system, turn it on for at least four minutes both after fueling and before starting your engine.
- If your vessel is not equipped with a power ventilation system (for example, a personal watercraft), open the engine compartment and sniff for gasoline fumes before starting the engine.

Backfire Flame Arrestors

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

- All powerboats except outboards that are operating on federal waters and are fueled with gasoline must have a backfire flame arrestor on each carburetor. The arrestors must be U.S. Coast Guard–approved (must comply with SAE J-1928 or UL 1111 standards).
- It is also *strongly recommended* that these vessels be equipped with backfire flame arrestors if on state waters.

Mufflers

- It is *strongly recommended* that all vessel engines have an effective muffling system.
- The use of dry stack headers or pipes extending directly from the engine of a motorboat that does not have any type of muffler is prohibited except for motorboats competing in an authorized marine event.

Sound-Producing Devices

In periods of reduced visibility, a sound-producing device is essential.

- The following is required on vessels only when operating on federal waters; however, it is *strongly recommended* that all vessels be so equipped.
 - Vessels less than 65.6 feet (20 meters) in length, which includes PWCs, are required to carry on board a whistle or horn or some other means to make an efficient sound signal.
 - Vessels 65.6 feet (20 meters) or more in length are required to carry on board a whistle or horn *and* a bell.
- No vessel may be equipped with a siren, except vessels used by law enforcement officers.

Some 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 powerboats when underway.
- One prolonged blast plus two short blasts at intervals of not more than two minutes is the signal used by sailing vessels.

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 the other boater's intentions.

Visual Distress Signals (VDSs)

Visual Distress Signals (VDSs) allow vessel operators to signal for help in the event of an emergency. VDSs are classified as day signals (visible in bright sunlight), night signals (visible at night), or both day and night signals.

- VDSs are not required on Arkansas state waters, but it is *strongly recommended* that you carry VDSs on your vessel.



Pyrotechnic Visual Distress Signals

Orange Smoke—Handheld

Orange Smoke—Floating

Day Signal

Red Meteor

Day and Night Signal

Red Flare

Day and Night Signal

Non-Pyrotechnic Visual Distress Signals

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 other Arkansas regulations that apply when on the water.

Unlawful Operation

Arkansas law states that these dangerous operating practices are illegal.

■ **Reckless Operation** of any motorboat or other vessel or the reckless manipulation of water skis, an aquaplane, or other device is operating in a manner that causes danger to the life, limb, or property of any person. Examples of reckless operation are:

- Weaving through congested waterway traffic
- Operating within 100 ft. of a towboat that is underway
- Jumping the wake of another vessel too close to that vessel or when visibility is obstructed
- Swerving at the last possible moment to avoid collision
- Chasing or harassing wildlife with a vessel

■ **Negligent Operation** is operating a vessel in a negligent manner such as:

- Not paying attention to the operation of the vessel
- Failing to keep a proper lookout
- Failing to observe the navigation rules
- Colliding with another vessel or object
- Operating a motorboat equipped by the manufacturer with a lanyard-type ignition safety switch without attaching the lanyard to your person, clothing, or PFD

Remember—vessel owners are responsible...

As an owner or lessee of a vessel, you are responsible for any injury or damage caused by the negligent operation of your vessel by others you knowingly allow to operate it. It will be assumed that you have given consent if your vessel is operated by an immediate family member.

- **Grossly Negligent Operation** is operating a vessel or manipulating water skis, an aquaplane, or other device in a manner that results in serious injury or death.

“Slow, No Wake Speed”—Speed at which the vessel does not produce a wake, not to exceed 5 miles per hour

- **Improper Speed or Distance** is not maintaining a proper speed or distance while operating a vessel. Specifically, it is illegal to operate a vessel:
 - In a manner or at a speed that exceeds the safe and reasonable limits under existing circumstances
 - At greater than “slow, no wake speed” in any posted “no wake” zone
 - At a rate of speed that creates a hazardous wash or wake on approaching or passing vessels; for example, a wake that causes other vessels to take on water or a wake sufficient to toss the occupants of other vessels about in a manner that causes injury or the risk of injury
 - At greater than “no wake speed” within 100 feet of a designated recreation area, dock, pier, raft, float, anchored vessel, dam, intake structure, or other obstruction unless a different speed limit has been established in the area
- **Overloading or Overpowering** is loading or powering the vessel beyond the recommended carrying capacity or horsepower shown on the capacity plate installed by the vessel’s manufacturer. Also, it is illegal to load a vessel without a capacity plate in a manner that is unsafe or that results in the vessel sinking or capsizing.
- **Riding on the Bow or Gunwales** is allowing passengers to ride or sit on the gunwales or on the decking over the bow while underway on a motorboat 26 ft. or less in length, unless the motorboat is equipped with adequate guards or railing to prevent falls overboard.

Obstructing Navigation

It is illegal to:

- Operate any vessel in such a way that it will interfere unnecessarily with the safe navigation of other vessels.
- Anchor a vessel in the traveled portion of a river or channel that will prevent or interfere with any other vessel passing through the same area.
- Moor or attach a vessel to a buoy (other than a mooring 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.

Homeland Security Restrictions

- Observe and avoid all security zones, including restricted areas near dams, power plants, etc. Do not stop or anchor beneath bridges or in the channel. Violators can expect a quick and severe response.
- Keep a sharp eye out for anything that looks peculiar or out of the ordinary. Report all activities that seem suspicious to the local authorities or the U.S. Coast Guard.

Alcohol and Drugs

You are prohibited from operating any motorboat or other vessel, or manipulating water skis or other devices, while under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance, or both.

- Arkansas law states that a person is considered to be boating while intoxicated if he or she:
 - Has a blood, breath, or urine alcohol concentration of 0.08% or more (if under the age of 21, 0.02% is considered intoxicated) *or...*
 - Is under the influence to such a degree that his or her reactions, motor skills, and judgment are substantially altered and endanger anyone.



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

- Arkansas law establishes the following penalties for boating while intoxicated.
 - Upon a first conviction, a person will lose his or her driver's license for a period of 6 months. In addition, the person may be fined up to \$1,000 and jailed up to one year.
 - In addition, the convicted person will be required to complete, at his or her own expense, an approved alcohol education or alcoholism treatment program.
- By operating a motorboat or other vessel on Arkansas waters, you have given "implied" consent to alcohol testing if an officer has reasonable cause to believe you are boating while intoxicated. Refusal can result in the loss of operating and driving privileges for up to six months.

Boating Accidents

- An operator involved in a boating accident must:
 - Stop his or her vessel *immediately* at the scene of the accident ***and...***
 - Assist anyone injured or in danger from the accident, unless doing so would seriously endanger his or her own vessel or passengers ***and...***
 - Give, in writing, his or her name, address, and vessel identification to anyone injured from the accident and to the owner of any damaged property.
- The operator or owner of a vessel involved in an accident must notify *immediately* the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission or local Sheriff's Department if:
 - A person dies or disappears ***or...***
 - A person is injured ***or...***
 - Damage to the vessel or other property is \$2,000 or more.
- State law requires all reportable accidents to be investigated. Call **1-800-482-9262**.

Diver-Down Flags

- Scuba divers or skin divers in federal waters must display a diver-down flag to mark their diving area. Those spear fishing in Arkansas state waters must display a diver-down flag and are required to stay within 300 feet of the displayed flag.
- Vessels not engaged in diving operations should stay at least 100 feet away from a displayed diver-down flag.



Divers Flag

A rectangular red flag with a white diagonal stripe is attached to a vessel, float, or buoy.



Alfa Flag

A blue and white International Code Flag A (Alfa flag) is flown from a vessel on federal waters.

Discharge of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances

- You are not allowed to discharge oil or hazardous substances into the water.
- 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 vessels, a bucket or bailer is adequate for temporary storage prior to disposing of the oil waste at an approved facility.
- If boating on federal waters and your vessel is 26 feet or longer, you must display a 5 x 8-inch placard made of durable material, fixed in a conspicuous place in the machinery spaces or at the bilge pump control station, stating the Federal Water Pollution Control Act's law.

If your vessel discharges oil or hazardous substances into the water, call the National Response Center at **1-800-424-8802**.



Discharge of Waste

- State law prohibits vessels from discharging any untreated sewage into the waters of Arkansas.
- All recreational vessels with installed toilet facilities must have an operable marine sanitation device (MSD).
- Vessels 65 ft. in length and under may use a Type I, II, or III MSD. Vessels over 65 ft. must install a Type II or III MSD.

Typical Marine Sanitation Device

"Y" valve must be secured

Drainage to pump-out station

Types of MSDs

There are three types of MSDs.

- ◆ Types I and II MSDs are usually found on large vessels. Waste is treated with special chemicals to kill bacteria before the waste is discharged. Types I and II MSDs with Y valves that would direct the waste overboard must be secured so that the valve cannot be opened. This can be done by placing a lock or non-reusable seal on the Y valve or by taking the handle off the Y valve in a closed position.
- ◆ Type III MSDs provide no treatment and are either holding tanks or portable toilets. Collected waste should be taken ashore and disposed of in a pump-out station or onshore toilet.



Discharge of Trash

It is illegal to dump refuse, garbage, or plastics into any state or federal 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 federal 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.

Glass Containers and Trash

The following restrictions apply to any vessel that is easily susceptible to swamping, tipping, or rolling (such as a canoe, kayak, or inner tube) and operating within the banks of Arkansas's navigable waterways (any navigable river, lake, or other body of water).

- Except for containers for substances prescribed by a licensed physician, no one may have or use glass containers within a vessel.
- All persons using a cooler, icebox, or other container for foodstuffs and beverages must:
 - Ensure that the container seals or locks in the contents to prevent them from spilling into the water.
 - Upon removing beverages from the cooler or other container, put them into or attach a floating holder or other device so that beverages cannot sink beneath the surface of the water.
 - Carry and affix to the vessel a sturdy container or a bag of mesh construction suitable for containing their trash and capable of being securely closed.
 - Transport all their trash to a place where the materials may be disposed of safely and lawfully.
- A container is not required for persons traveling without foodstuffs or beverages.

Remember when you caught your first fish?

Our children will not experience that same thrill unless we keep this country's waterways pollution-free. Using pump-out stations and properly disposing of our trash is something we can all do to protect our waters.

**Help us keep Arkansas
waters clean!**



Specifically for PWCs

PWC operators must obey the laws that apply to other vessels as well as obey additional requirements that apply specifically to the operation of personal watercraft.

Requirements Specific to PWCs

- Every person on board a PWC must *wear* a U.S. Coast Guard–approved personal flotation device (life jacket).
- An operator of a PWC equipped with a lanyard-type ignition safety switch must attach the lanyard to his or her person, clothing, or PFD.
- PWCs may be operated only between one-half hour before sunrise and one-half hour after sunset.
- There are age restrictions on operators of personal watercraft.
- It is illegal to operate a personal watercraft in an unsafe or reckless manner. Examples include:
 - Becoming airborne or completely leaving the water while crossing the wake of another vessel within 100 ft. of the vessel creating the wake
 - Weaving through congested traffic
 - Operating at greater than “slow, no wake speed” within 100 feet of an anchored or moored vessel, shoreline, dock, pier, swim float, marked swim area, swimmer, surfer, person fishing, or any manually propelled vessel
 - Failing to observe the navigation rules or following too close to another vessel, including another personal watercraft. (Note: Following too close means moving in the same direction and operating at a speed greater than 10 miles per hour when approaching within 100 ft. to the rear of or 50 ft. to the side of another vessel that is underway, unless the vessel is in a channel too narrow to keep the required distance, in which case a PWC may be operated at a speed that is reasonable and prudent.)

Sharing Your PWC...Safely!

Sharing the fun of your personal watercraft (PWC) with friends is all part of the boating experience. Before you share your PWC, however, make sure that others you allow to operate it understand their responsibilities as an operator. They need to know that they have the same responsibilities as any other vessel operator, including obeying the navigation rules.

In addition:

- Make sure that anyone you allow to operate your PWC meets the minimum age and education requirements for PWC operation in Arkansas and the local waterway you are using.
- Show new operators how to start and reboard the PWC while on shore or in shallow water.
- Explain how to steer and control the PWC. Tell all new operators and remind experienced operators that ***power is required for steering control!***
- Make sure that the operator understands how to use the ignition safety switch and attaches the lanyard to his or her person or PFD before starting the engine.
- Have anyone new to PWCs go out in an uncongested area first. Tell them to stay clear of other PWCs, boats, or persons in the water.
- Explain how to recognize a “slow, no wake speed” marker and what to do when approaching one.

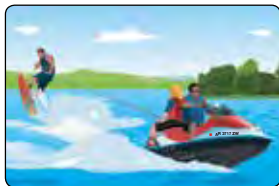


Specifically for Skiing

Vessel operators towing a person(s) on water skis or a similar device have additional laws they must follow.

Towing Skiers

- Every vessel towing a person(s) on water skis, an aquaplane, or other device must have on board, in addition to the operator, an observer at least 12 years old and in a position to observe the progress of the person(s) being towed.
 - Boats equipped with a wide-angle, convex, marine rear-view mirror in a position to observe the skiers being towed are exempt from this requirement.
 - PWC operators may *not* substitute a mirror for an observer (that is, a PWC must have an observer at least 12 years old).
- All persons being towed behind a motorboat or motorized device on water skis, an aquaplane, or other device must *wear* a USCG–approved PFD (life jacket).
- It is illegal for vessels to tow a person(s) on water skis, an aquaplane, or other device between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before sunrise. This restriction does not apply to night water-skiing or aquaplaning on controlled areas that are designated for those purposes and have adequate lighting provided.
- It is illegal to operate or manipulate any towing vessel, a tow rope, or other device in such a way as to cause the towed device or towed person(s) to collide with or strike any object or person(s).
- If towing a person on skis or other device with a PWC, the PWC must be rated to carry at least three people—the operator, the observer, and the retrieved skier.



Federal Waters in Arkansas

COE Impoundments/Entergy Lakes and Reservoirs

Beaver	Catherine	Dierks	Greeson	Norfolk
Blue	Dardanelle	Gillham	Hamilton	Ouachita
Mountain	DeGray	Greers	Millwood	Ozark
Bull Shoals	DeQueen	Ferry	Nimrod	Table Rock

Navigable Rivers or Pools Include:

- Arkansas River from the mouth to the Oklahoma state line
- Black River from the mouth to the Missouri state line
- Mississippi River from the Louisiana state line to the Missouri state line
- Ouachita River from the mouth to Blakely Dam
- Red River from the Louisiana state line to the Oklahoma state line
- White River from the mouth to Dam No. 1 at Batesville

Aquatic Nuisance Species

Introducing non-native species into Arkansas waters can upset the balance of the ecosystem, thereby harming the environment. Aquatic nuisance species, such as zebra mussels, quagga mussels, milfoil, and hydrilla, most often spread between waterways by hitching a ride on vessels and trailers. When transplanted into new waters, these organisms proliferate, displacing native species and damaging the water resource.



How You Can Help

- Inspect your vessel and trailer, and remove any plants and animals you see before leaving the area.
- Clean your boat and trailer by removing all visible plants or animals. Wash the boat with soapy water, preferably with a sprayer that heats to 140°F.
- Drain all the water from your boat by removing all plugs and running the bilge pump.
- Dry the boat by allowing it to sit out at least five days if possible before going on to a new waterbody.
- Empty your bait bucket on land. Never release live bait into a body of water or release aquatic animals from one body of water into another.
- For more information, call the AGFC at 501-912-6843.

Arkansas Required Equipment Checklist



	PWC	Boat Less Than 16 Ft.	Boat 16 Ft. to Less Than 26 Ft.
Boater Education Certificate on Board	✓ 1	✓ 1	✓ 1
Certificate of Number on Board	✓	✓	✓
Validation Decals Displayed	✓	✓	✓
PFDs: Wearable	✓ 2	✓ 3	✓ 3
PFD: Throwable			✓
Ignition Safety Switch	✓	✓ 4	✓ 4
Type B-I Fire Extinguisher	✓	✓	✓
Backfire Flame Arrestor	✓ 5	✓ 5,6	✓ 5,6
Ventilation System	✓	✓	✓
Horn, Whistle, or Bell	✓ 5	✓ 5	✓ 5
Navigation Lights	7	✓	✓

1. A valid boater education certificate is required for motorboat operators who were born on or after January 1, 1986.
2. Everyone on board personal watercraft (PWCs) must *wear* an approved personal flotation device (life jacket) at all times.
3. Children 12 years of age and younger must *wear* an approved life jacket while underway in any open area of any vessel.
4. Required when operating a motorboat.
5. Required when boating on federal waters.
6. Required on inboards and stern drives only.
7. Certain items are not applicable to PWCs because PWCs are not allowed to operate at night.

ARKANSAS GAME & FISH COMMISSION

Headquarters

2 Natural Resources Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205
Little Rock: 501-223-6300
Toll-free: 1-800-364-4263

Visit us on the Internet
at www.agfc.com



For lost Boating or Hunting
Education Cards, visit
www.ilostmycard.com
or call 1-800-830-2268

Planning to boat on the lakes
of Arkansas's neighbors?
Learn their boating laws
before you go!

States vary in their boating laws—especially with respect to the age required to operate a vessel legally and the requirements for boater safety certification. Below are the state agencies to call and find out before you go boating.

Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Wildlife
and Fisheries
call: 225-765-2984

Mississippi

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
call: 228-374-5000
Mississippi Department of Wildlife,
Fisheries and Parks
call: 601-432-2400

Regional Offices

Northwest Regional Office
455 Dam Site Road
Eureka Springs, AR 72631
1-866-253-2506

East Central Regional Office
1201 North Highway 49
Brinkley, AR 72021
1-877-734-4581

North Central Regional Office
Highway 56 N
Calico Rock, AR 72519
1-877-297-4331

South Central Regional Office
500 Ben Lane
Camden, AR 71701
1-877-836-4612

Fort Smith Regional Office
8000 Taylor Avenue
Fort Smith, AR 72916
1-877-478-1043

Southwest Regional Office
7004 Highway 67 E
Perrytown, AR 71801
1-877-777-5580

Hot Springs Office
350 Fish Hatchery Road
Hot Springs, AR 71913
1-877-525-8606

Northeast Regional Office
600-B East Lawson Road
Jonesboro, AR 72404
1-877-972-5438

Southeast Regional Office
771 Jordan
Monticello, AR 71655
1-877-367-3559

West Central Regional Office
1266 Lock and Dam Road
Russellville, AR 72802
1-877-967-7577

Missouri

Missouri State Water Patrol
call: 573-751-3333

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Highway Patrol - Troop W
call: 918-847-2001

Tennessee

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
call: 615-781-6682

Texas

Texas Parks & Wildlife
call: 1-800-792-1112