

Summary of Joint Uniform Lake Law Ordinances for Geneva Lake, Wisconsin

***Speed Limits:**

- 45 mph on Weekdays (Monday –Friday Noon)
- 35 mph on Weekends (Friday Noon – Sunday)
- 35 mph on All Holidays
- 15 mph at Night (Sunset to Sunrise)

***Noise Level:**

- .86 decibels

***Swimming From Boats:**

1. Swimming from boats is allowed only if the boat is anchored or manned by a competent observer.
2. Swimmers must remain within 50' of the boat at all times.
3. No Swimming in the traffic lanes unless the boat is manned by a competent observer.
4. No Swimming during the nighttime hours.

***Water Skiing/ Tubing:**

1. Any person being towed on water skis, wakeboards, tubes, etc... must wear a US Coast Guard approved P.F.D.
2. Boats towing water skiers, wakeboards, tubes, etc... must have a competent observer on board the boat. (Minimum number persons is 3 driver, skier, observer).

***Scuba Diving:**

1. Scuba Divers must register with the Water Safety Patrol (one time registration – free of charge).
2. Scuba Divers must dive from an anchored boat, and that boat must be manned by a competent person and have a scuba flag displayed from the boat.
3. Minimum of 2 divers down at one time.
4. No Scuba Diving in Geneva Bay, Williams Bay, or Fontana Bay from May 20th to September 15th.
5. No Scuba Diving at night.

***Shooting Projectiles:**

1. Shooting or launching of projectiles (water balloons, fireworks, etc...) in the direction of people, watercraft, or property is prohibited.

***Personal Floatation Devices (PFDs):**

1. All boats must have at least one wearable PFD of proper size for each person on board the boat. In addition boats 16' or longer must have an additional floatation device (IE: floatation cushion, Ring buoy, etc...).

Wisconsin Personal Water Craft Law

Personal Watercraft (PWC) are classified as Class A (less than 16 feet in length) inboard boats. All PWC must be registered and display valid registration decals and registration numbers on the forward half of both sides of the craft and ABIDE BY ALL BOATING REGULATIONS, plus the following specific regulations.

1. No person may operate a PWC from Sunset to sunrise.
2. All persons riding a PWC must wear a PFD of proper size and type (type I, II, III, or V).
3. No person may operate a PWC equipped by the manufacture with a lanyard without the lanyard attached to the operator.
No person may sell a PWC manufactured after 01/01/93 unless equipped with a lanyard or self-circling device.
4. No one under 12 may operate a PWC (rental age limit is 16).
5. Persons at least 12 but under 16 must be in possession of a valid boating safety student certificate.

Suggestions for Safety

1. Keep an alert lookout.
2. It is recommended that all occupants of any boat, or at least children and nonswimmers, wear an approved personal flotation device for their safety.
3. Obey rules of the road.
4. If the boat tips but floats-stay with it.
5. Keep away from immediately above and below locks and dams, especially on the Mississippi River. Obey the U.S. Corps of Engineers signs.
6. Wisconsin weather has a habit of changing radically in a short period of time. These changes are almost always forecast well in advance by the weather bureau and warnings issued.

Make Wisconsin Waters Safer



Report Boating Violations call your local law enforcement agent (warden, sheriff, or police department), or call 1-800-TIP-WDNR for violations.

10 MOST COMMON BOATING VIOLATIONS

- Failure to provide proper number of personal flotation devices.
- Operating boat without valid certificate of number.
- Operating boat in prohibited area, in excess of speed limit on lakes 50 acres or less, or in excess of fixed limits.
- Operating motorboat while under influence of an intoxicant, or operating motorboat with BAC of 0.1% or greater.
- Operating boat at night without required lights.
- Failure to display registration number or decal on boat
- Failure to secure or cover storage battery.
- Operating within 100 feet of dock, raft, pier, etc.
- Operating boat towing water skier without an observer.
- Riding on gunwales or bow.

Water Skiing

It is unlawful:

- To operate a motorboat having in tow a person on water skis, aquaplane or similar device other than in a careful and prudent manner and at a reasonable and safe distance from persons or property.
- To engage in water skiing, aquaplaning or similar activity from sunset to sunrise.
- To operate a motorboat towing a person whether or not on water skis, aquaplane, parasail or similar device, unless there is *in the boat* a competent person in addition to the operator in a position to observe the activity of the person being towed. The observer must be competent in fact, and must observe the person being towed and relay signals to the operator.
- To operate a boat towing persons engaged in water skiing, aquaplaning, parasailing or similar activity within 100 feet of any occupied anchored boat, any personal watercraft, or marked swimming area or public boat landing, except where pickup and drop areas are established and marked with regulatory markers.
- To operate a personal watercraft towing a person on waterskis, aquaplane, or similar device unless the personal watercraft is at least 9 feet 11 inches in length and is designed to seat at least 3 persons.
- For a person engaged in water skiing, aquaplaning or similar activity to get within 100 feet of a personal watercraft or allow the tow rope while in use to get within 100 feet of a personal watercraft.

Note: Local ordinances may be more restrictive. Inquire through local boat patrol or municipality.

Skin Diving

- It is unlawful to engage in underwater skin diving or swimming with use of swimming fins outside a marked swim area or beyond 150 feet from shore unless the location of such swimming or diving is marked by a diver's flag.
- It is unlawful to scuba dive outside a marked swim area unless the location of the scuba diving is marked by a diver's flag.
- Except in case of emergency, anyone engaged in such swimming or diving shall not rise to the surface outside of 50 feet from diver's flag.

Wisconsin's New Personal Watercraft Law

Personal Watercraft (PWC) are classified as Class A (less than 16 feet in length) inboard boats. All PWC must be registered and display valid registration decals and registration numbers on the forward half of boat sides of the craft and abide by all boating regulations, plus the following specific regulations.

Synopsis of Wisconsin's New Personal Watercraft Law

1. No person may operate a PWC from sunset to sunrise.
2. All persons riding a PWC must wear a PFD of the proper size and type (type I, II, III, or V).
3. No person may operate a PWC equipped by the manufacturer with a lanyard without the lanyard attached to the operator.
 - ✓ No person may sell a PWC manufactured after 1/1/93 unless equipped with a lanyard or self-circling device.
 - ✓ No person may sell a PWC manufactured after 1/1/94 unless equipped with lanyard.
4. No one under 12 may operate a PWC.
(Rental age limit is 16)
5. Persons at least 12 but under 16 must be in possession of a valid boating safety student certificate (issued under s. 30.74(1)) to operate a PWC. (Parental supervision is not a substitute for boating safety certificate as with other motorboats. PWC operators must have a certificate.)
6. It is illegal to operate a PWC facing backwards.
7. Rental PWC:
 - ✓ No one under 16 may rent a PWC.
 - ✓ Rental agent must provide PFD of proper size and type.
 - ✓ Rental agent must provide renters with instruction on PWC operation unless the renter holds a valid boating safety student certificate (s. 30.74(1)) or has previous experience operating a PWC.
8. There is no towing of persons engaged in water skiing, aquaplaning, or similar activities *unless* the PWC is 9'11" and designed to seat 3 people.
9. PWC towing of stranded or disabled boats is only allowed if speeds do not exceed slow-no-wake.
10. Operation of a PWC within 100' of another boat is *only* allowed if the following requirements are met:
 - ✓ Operation does not exceed a slow-no-wake speed.
 - ✓ Neither boat is involved in any type of water skiing or similar activity.
11. It is illegal to operate a PWC within 100' of the following:
 - ✓ another boat towing a skier or person engaged in similar activity.
 - ✓ the tow rope of another motorboat towing a skier or person engaged in similar activity.
 - ✓ a person involved in skiing or a similar activity.
12. No person operating *any type of motorboat* (including PWC) that is towing a persons engaged in water skiing, aquaplaning, or similar activity may operate within 100 feet of any occupied anchored boat, any personal watercraft, and xmarked swimming area, or public boat landing.
13. No person who is water skiing or engaged in a similar activity, may get within 100 feet of a personal watercraft or allow the tow rope to get within 100 feet of a personal watercraft.

Rules 11 through 13 do not apply to waterski pickup or drop areas that are marked with regulatory markers and that are open to operators of personal watercraft and to persons and motorboats engaged in water skiing.

The use of intoxicants impairs a boat operator's senses and judgement. Intoxicants are related to 50% of all boating accidents.

In Wisconsin, all motor boat operators are deemed to have given consent to a blood alcohol test.

PLEASE NOTE:

This is not a complete set of boating laws. Please read it carefully. If you have any questions contact Dept. of Natural Resources personnel or your local law enforcement authorities.