

North Lake Management District and Lake Stewardship Committee Guidelines

Revised April, 2026

NLMD and Lake Stewardship Committee Boating Guidelines

The North Lake Management District (NLMD) and the Lake Stewardship Committee have agreed upon a set of safe and courteous boater guidelines to assure enjoyable use of our lake during summer seasons. The guidelines are presented below. We are counting on responsible and courteous behavior, from all of us on North Lake, to make these guidelines work well for everybody. We strongly encourage all residents to help each other be aware of these guidelines and respect them. **If the guidelines are not followed, additional steps will be taken.** Have a great summer!

- 1 No "Artificial Wake Enhancement Mode" boating on the Little Lake.** This recommendation is based on five years of results from the North Lake Study and other lake studies which show lake bed and lake shore damage from the wake surfing activity.
- 2 All wakeboard traffic** to operate at least 500' from shore.
- 3 Wake Surfing** boat traffic to operate as close to middle of the **Big Lake** as possible. Please attempt to position your boat so the largest surf wake flows away from closest shoreline.
- 4 Avoid Sandbars** When creating a wake, please avoid traveling between the sunken island and the shore when boats are parked on the island.
- 5 Wakeboard Traffic** When wakeboard traffic is present on the lake, non-wakeboard traffic (pontoons, other boats operating at slow speed) and sports (canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, etc.) please operate within the no-wakeboard zone within 500' of shore. This pattern not only optimizes safety it allows wakeboard traffic to operate more efficiently by not having to dodge non-wakeboard traffic.
- 6 Quiet Time** Please observe "Slow-No Wake" beginning at 6:00 PM on all Saturdays, Sundays and holidays beginning on the Saturday of Memorial weekend through Labor Day.
- 7 Courtesy** Above all, please be courteous and thoughtful when operating your chosen craft on North Lake.

North Lake Management District

Rules and Regulations for Boat Operation on North Lake

Revision: May 2023

We have prepared a summary of the important requirements for safe and legal boat operations as stated in the ordinances/law of Town of Merton, Village of Chenequa, and the State of Wisconsin. Please take the time to read it carefully, save it, and be sure that those in your family and others who use your watercraft abide by the guidelines and rules. Thank you.

Part One...Law Enforcement

There are four law enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction over boat operations on North Lake. These agencies are:

- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- The Village of Chenequa Police Department (Boat Patrol)
- The Town of Merton (Boat Patrol)
- Waukesha County Sheriff's Department All of these agencies have arrest powers relative to safe boat operations, and they enforce state and local laws regarding boat operations.

Part Two...Proper Boat Registration

- All motorized vessels and sailboats larger than 12 feet in length must be registered with the State of Wisconsin. The registration number and a decal of registration must be displayed on your boat.
- A certificate of registration must be available on board to be presented to a law enforcement officer if you are stopped for inspection or violation.
- The correct placement of registration numbers on your boat is detailed in ***The Wisconsin Boating Laws and Responsibilities*** (PUB-LE-301 2022 > see a link on the North Lake Management District website—NLMD.org). The letters must be at least 3 inch block numbers and letters to be of a contrasting color to the hull.

Part Three...Required Equipment

- All vessels (including PWC, canoes, kayaks and paddleboards) must have at least one approved USCG life vest for each person on board.
- An approved USCG Type IV throwable device is required on motor boats, 16 feet and longer.
- Proper Fire extinguishers are required on inboard and outboard motorboats greater than 16 feet in length or boats with built-in fuel tanks.
- Motorboats with battery systems must safely secure the battery with proper straps and terminal nonconductive covers.
- Motorboats and motor-powered sailboats must have navigation lights on the bow and stern. The navigation lights must be used from sunset to sunrise.
- Vessels of any size, moored on North Lake after sunset, must have a white, illuminated light ("anchor light") if more than 200' from shore.
- Additional details regarding equipment are available for review in ***The Wisconsin Boating Laws and Responsibilities*** (PUB-LE-301 2022).

Part Four...Legal Boat Operators

- Motorboats – A Person under 10 years of age cannot operate a motorboat.
- Motorboats – A Person between 10-11 years of age may operate with a parent, guardian or designate on board the vessel and closely supervising the operation.
- Motorboats – A Person between 12-16 years of age may operate with either a parent, guardian or designate or alone if they have completed an approved boater safety class.
- Personal Water Craft (PWC) – A Person less than 12 years of age cannot operate a PWC.
- Personal Water Craft (PWC) – A Person between 12-15 years of age must have completed an approved boater safety class.
- Personal Water Craft (PWC) – A Person at least 16 years of age must have completed an approved boater safety course. A person born before January 1, 1989 is exempt.
- A Person less than 16 years of age cannot rent or lease a PWC.

Part Five...Vessels who Declare Distress

Any boat operator is required to stop and render aid to another vessel which declares a distress situation by signal (flare, flag or arm signals) or call for help.

Part Six...How to Assure a Ticket or Arrest from the DNR, Chenequa PD or Merton Boat Patrol Officer on North Lake

- Reckless operation of the vessel
- Having a passenger ride on the bow, gunwale or stern while in operation
- Exceeding speed limits on North Lake (35 mph)
- Circling other vessels or swimmers within 200 feet or within 100 feet of a diver down flag
- Operating at greater than "slow, no wake" speeds within 100 feet of shoreline, pier, raft, or other boats
- Operating beyond "slow, no wake" speeds during one hour after sunset until one hour before sunrise of the next day
- Operating while intoxicated
- Tubing, water skiing, etc. before 9:00 am or after sunset.
- Any boat towing a wake surfer, skier, tuber, etc. must travel in a counter clockwise direction.

Part Seven...Courtesy Recommendations for our Neighbors, Friends, and Yourself on North Lake

- Water skiing, tubing, etc., wear a wearable life vest (Recommended)
- When towing a water skier, tubing, etc. have a spotter (Recommended)
- It is recommended that all vessels travel in a counter clockwise direction on North Lake
- Avoid the sailboat race course area immediately before and during races.
- When operating a powered vessel, avoid travel between swim rafts and piers.
- Found objects should be placed on the end of the nearest pier until claimed.
- Be aware of wake and wash when operating wake board boats and other vessels to avoid damaging people's property or endangering lives or injury. Pay attention to the effect of large waves to shorelines, piers, and other boats.
- Music on your boat should be played at a level for the enjoyment of your passengers and not shared with others on the lake. Noise on water travels a long distance at high volumes. Excessive volume is a "ticketable" offense.

To ensure a safe summer for all, review ***The Wisconsin Boating Laws and Responsibilities*** (PUB-LE-301 2022) published by the WDNR (see North Lake Management District link—NLMD.org or go to DNR.wi.gov).

Have a great and safe summer!