

BIG BLAKE LAKE PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION DISTRICT

CLIP AND SAVE — SHARE WITH VISITORS, GUESTS AND RENTERS

KNOW SAFETY TIPS BEFORE FUN ON THE LAKE

Slow-no-wake zone: Is defined as the minimum speed required to maintain steerage. Includes all boaters and jet skis. Boaters watch your distance, 100 FEET: WI law prohibits boaters within 100 feet of shoreline, docks, rafts, piers, swimmers and buoyed restricted areas. Jet skis watch your distance, 200 FEET: Cannot operate at a speed greater than slow-no-wake within 200 feet of the shoreline of any lake. They also are required to cut back to slow-no-wake speed when passing within 100 feet of other boats, including other jet skis.

Life jackets: required for kids under 13. A life jacket is required for every person on your boat.

Jet ski safety: A USCG approved life jacket is required. Do not operate between sunset and sunrise. Be mindful of wildlife (geese and loons). Must be at least 12 years old to operate, see below.

Paddle boards: Life jacket is recommended. Fastest growing water sport in the world!

Age to operate? Anyone born on or after January 1, 1989 is required to complete a boating safety course to legally operate a motorized boat or jet ski. Must be at least 10 years old to operate a motorboat; 10 to 11-year-olds must be accompanied by parent or someone at least 18 years old. Must be at least 12 years old to operate a jet ski. Persons at least 12 but less than 16 years of age may operate a personal watercraft if they have successfully completed a DNR prescribed Boating Safety Course and possess a safety certificate issued by the Department or state of their residency. Parental accompaniment may not be substituted for possession of a valid DNR safety certificate.

Sunset to sunrise: WI law... no skiing, no towing, no jet skis

Other checklist items: Is there a fire extinguisher on the boat? Is there a throwable floatation device on the boat? Test all of the lights work for sunset cruising? Is there a lifejacket on board for everyone? Leave alcohol on shore and never use alcohol before or during operating a craft on the water.

Wildlife caution: Watch out for loons! They are hard to see and cherished on our lake. Stay clear of geese families by 100 feet.

Emergency Contacts: DNR Warden: 715-822-8107
Polk County Sheriff: 715-485-8300

More than 90% of boat fatalities related to drowning involve victims not wearing life jackets, you need one for your safety.

Intoxicants are related to 50% of all boating accidents.

More boating safety tips:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/boat/boatSafetyTips.html>

WI fishing license: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Fishing>

Wisconsin Laws:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/pubs/LE/LE0301.pdf>

Polk County Laws:

<http://www.obnet.com/polkcounty/tourism/boat.html>

10 MOST COMMON BOATING VIOLATIONS

1. Failure to provide life jackets for all on board.
2. Operating boat without valid certificate of number.
3. Operating boat in prohibited area, in excess of speed limit on lakes 50 acres or less, or in excess of fixed limits.
4. Personal Watercraft (jet ski) violations.
5. Operating motorboat while under the influence of an intoxicant, or operating motorboat with BAC of 0.1% or greater.
6. Operating within 100 feet of dock, raft, swimmer, pier, etc.
7. Operating boat at night without required lights.
8. Failure to display registration number or decal on boat.
9. Failure to secure or cover storage battery.
10. Failure to have certificate of number on board.

BOAT PARADE — SUNDAY, JULY 3 4:00PM START AT YOUR DOCK

The Independence Day holiday is almost here! We are expecting a lot of enthusiasm for the Blake Lake Boat Parade. Last year, over 30 boats participated! Everyone is welcome to join in the parade, decorated or undecorated boats. We are trying something new this year. Boats will wait at their dock until a 4pm “shotgun start” and travel counter clockwise around the lake. Ford Elliott has offered to perform the shotgun task from their property on the northeast side of the lake.

Please note that water balloons are discouraged during the parade. Water guns, on the other hand are fine. Please be mindful of all boaters, those who do not want to get wet or who have small children.

WEED CUTTING — RECORD YEAR ANOTHER BUMPER CROP OF CURLY-LEAF IN POLK COUNTY LAKES

Just like 2015, we have a “bumper crop” of curly leaf pondweed in the lake again this year. So far this year we have harvested a record 159 loads of weeds compared to 171 loads in all of 2015 and only 30 loads in 2014! Weather permitting (wind or rain), weed cutting continues at a heavy pace until mid July. Max Bay and Bruce Peterson operate the harvester. Weeds are not cut on the weekend. “We expect to cut weeds at this pace until the weeds drop or die down starting now in late June. After mid-July we will cut as needed until August 30”, says BLPRD Aquatic Plant Manager Jim Maxwell. He can be reached at 715-857-5316 if you have questions.

The majority of weeds you are seeing on the lake are curly-leaf pondweed, an invasive species, unfortunately, common to 542 lakes in Wisconsin. According to Jeremy Williamson, Water Quality Specialist, Polk County Land and Water Resources Department, “weed growth in lakes varies year to year. Light snow cover over the ice allowed more light to penetrate. More than any other factor, this is likely the reason we are seeing more weed growth in lakes across Polk County”. Another factor that added to the bumper crop of curly-leaf is the lower water level of the lake at the start of Spring.

WHY IS THE LAKE WATER SO CLEAR? IT'S THE WEEDS

With a bumper crop of curly-leaf pondweed growing this year, more weeds means more clarity. Up until now that is. Once the curly-leaf dies back in July, nutrients will be available to other plant forms, and by August, you will see the change. Water clarity, or seechi depth, changes over the Summer. Seechi depth is a measure of the cloudiness or turbidity of surface water. In May, seechi depth can be 11 feet, in June it can be 8.5 feet and August, 4 feet.

SLOW-NO-WAKE ZONE — BUOYS MARK THE ZONE

BLPRD established, and is enforcing, a slow-no-wake zone in the narrows, marked by 6 buoys. Slow-no-wake is defined as the minimum speed required to maintain steerage and the law applies to all boaters, pontoons, jet skis, fishing boats, speed boats, etc. Wisconsin law prohibits boaters within 100 feet of shoreline, docks, rafts, piers, swimmers and buoyed restricted areas.

Jet skis cannot operate at a speed greater than slow-no-wake within 200 feet of the shoreline. They also are required to cut back to slow-no-wake speed when passing within 100 feet of other boats, including other jet skis.

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BLAKE LAKE
BUOYS