

COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

# 2026 Boating Handbook

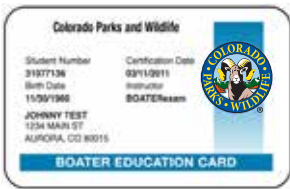
WITH REGULATIONS AND STATUTES





# New to boating? Need a refresher? Or just want to improve your boating skills?

## TAKE A BOATER EDUCATION COURSE!



Colorado Boating Safety course is a nationally recognized National State Boating Law Administration (NASBLA) boater education course that is accepted across the nation.

### This course teaches you:

- ▶ Navigational “Rules of the Road”
- ▶ Colorado boating laws and regulations
- ▶ Required equipment
- ▶ Best practices for safety



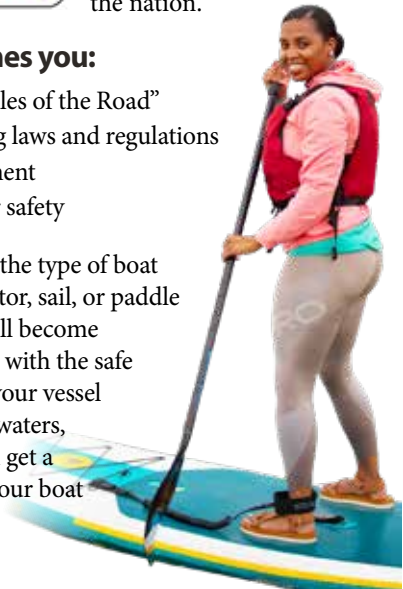
Regardless of the type of boat you have (motor, sail, or paddle craft), you will become



more familiar with the safe operation of your vessel on Colorado waters,



and may even get a discount on your boat insurance!



© NATIONAL SAFE BOATING COUNCIL

### In-person/virtual class registration



[cpw.info/co-boating-safely-course](http://cpw.info/co-boating-safely-course)

### How to sign up:

Register with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, or visit one of our approved on-line course providers:

- ▶ BoatEd
- ▶ Recademics
- ▶ Boat US
- ▶ BoatTest101
- ▶ BoaterExam

Visit: [cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety](http://cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety)

## OWNER/BOAT INFORMATION

Name of Owner \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Boat \_\_\_\_\_

Boat CL# \_\_\_\_\_

### Personal Contact Information

Owner's Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Owner's Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Owner's Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Contact Information

Home Marina Phone \_\_\_\_\_

State Park Main Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other Important Phone Numbers \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## COLORADO BOATING SAFELY COURSE



Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Boating Safety Program promotes safe vessel operation while enhancing boating experiences. For information on upcoming boat safety classes, please call (303) 291-7575 or visit [cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety](http://cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety)

# Dear Colorado Boater,

You are among Colorado's approximately 73,000 recreational boaters who annually visit marinas, lakes, and rivers seeking an outdoor recreational experience.

In order to ensure that your experience is a safe and enjoyable one, it is important for you to know and follow the regulations and guidelines found in this brochure.

The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Boating Regulations are based upon Colorado's Statutes mostly found in Title 33 and Colorado Parks and Wildlife Rules and Regulations, but uses layman's terms rather than legal language in most instances.

Not all provisions of law pertaining to boating are included here. Consequently, this brochure is not suitable for use in law enforcement or litigation. To find exact state statutes and Colorado Parks and Wildlife Rules and Regulations please refer to

[cpw.state.co.us/rules-and-regulations](http://cpw.state.co.us/rules-and-regulations)

This brochure is one of many resources available through Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Boating Safety Program utilizes the experience, training and knowledge of the state's experts in recreational-related matters, including public access, information, safety, education, and marine law enforcement.

To see all the boatable waters in Colorado please visit [cpw.state.co.us/activities/boating](http://cpw.state.co.us/activities/boating) or to learn more about Colorado Parks and Wildlife and resources available to you please visit [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us)

We want you to have a safe and enjoyable boating experience. Please remember, if it's your boat, it's your responsibility.

**Lastly, please wear a life jacket! They save lives!**



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# Registration

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## Registration Required

Colorado Law (CRS 33-13-103) requires any vessel with a motor or sail operated in Colorado on any public water to be registered with Colorado Parks and Wildlife except:

- ✗ Boats propelled manually (Canoes, Kayaks, Paddleboards, non motorized rafts)
- ✗ Vessels documented by the United States Coast Guard
- ✗ Foreign vessels
- ✗ Vessels having valid registration and numbered correctly in the state of principal use and not used in Colorado over 60 consecutive days.
- ✗ Non-Resident Racing Boats (Regulation #204) on the day before and the day of and at the site of a Division authorized race.

These guidelines include vessels that are moored, whether or not they are used.

## How to Register

An application to register a vessel may be submitted at any Colorado Parks and Wildlife Office. Please see our Contact Us page [cpw.state.co.us/contact-us](http://cpw.state.co.us/contact-us) for a list of office locations, or call the CPW Call Center at 303.297.1192 for a location near you.

You can download and complete the Boat Registration form at [cpw.state.co.us/register-boat](http://cpw.state.co.us/register-boat) and return it, along with your proof of ownership when you visit our offices.

## What constitutes acceptable proof of ownership?

- A Bill of sale that includes both the seller and buyer's printed names and signatures, the vessel/vehicle identification number (if any), the vessel/vehicle make, model and year (if known), and the date of the sale;
- Previous registration certificate issued by a governmental entity that lists the applicant as registered owner;
- Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin (MCO)/ Manufacturer Statement of Origin (MSO);
- Certificate of Title;
- Any court issued document proving ownership;
- A collection of personal property by affidavit form pursuant to 15-12-1201, C.R.S.;
- A physical inspection form completed by a CPW agent.

An acceptable private party to private party Bill of Sale Template can be found at: [cpw.state.co.us/Documents/BuyApply/Bill-of-Sale-Template.pdf](http://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/BuyApply/Bill-of-Sale-Template.pdf)

A dated and signed Bill of Sale is good for 30 days before you have to register your boat (CPW Regulation #203)

Registration and registration renewals are required annually and are valid from January 1 through December 31 each year.

Registrations and registration renewals can be done 45 days prior to the registration expiration date (Dec. 31).

The annual registration fees are determined by the length of the boat. Current fees are as follows:

- ▶ **Less than 20 feet in length** ..... \$35.25
- ▶ **20 feet to less than 30 feet.** ..... \$45.25
- ▶ **30 feet or greater** ..... \$75.25



**Motorboats and sailboats must have an aquatic nuisance species (ANS) stamp prior to launching in Colorado. Please refer to page 50 for more details. This change took effect Jan. 2019.**

## Vessel Classification

(CPW Regulation #205) Vessels in the State of Colorado are divided into four classes:

- ★ **Class A:** Vessels less than sixteen feet in length.
- ★ **Class 1:** Vessels sixteen feet (4.87 meters) or over and less than twenty-six feet (7.92 meters) in length.
- ★ **Class 2:** Vessels twenty-six feet (7.92 meters) or over and less than forty feet (12.19 meters) in length.
- ★ **Class 3:** Vessels forty feet (12.19 meters) to not more than sixty-five feet (19.18) in length.

## Vessel Measuring For Classification

(CPW Regulation #206) For determining “class”, the length of a boat is from end to end over the deck excluding sheer. It means a straight line measurement of the overall length from the foremost part of the vessel measuring parallel to the centerline. Bowsprits, fenders, rudders, outboard motors and brackets, and similar fittings or attachments are not to be included in the measurement. Length shall be stated in feet and inches or meters.

## Display of Numbers and Registration Stickers

Along with your yearly validation stickers, you will receive your boat registration card in the mail. The yearly validation stickers and registration numbers issued at the time of registration must be clearly visible and attached on each side of the bow on the forward half of the vessel (see images on page 11).

Yearly validation stickers must be securely affixed two inches to the left of the “C” and in line with, the registration numbers. The numbers must be visible from each side of the vessel. No other numbers, letters or devices may be placed in the vicinity of the state-assigned number.

- ▶ To separate the numerals from the letters, spaces the width of the letter “C” or hyphens may be used between the prefix and the number, and between the number and the suffix.
- ▶ Letter and numerals must be block characters at least three inches high and of a color that contrasts with the background and so maintained as to be clearly visible and legible. In determining height and contrast any border, trim, outlining or shading around the number shall not be considered. (CRS 33-13-104 (1))
- ▶ If placement on a flared bow or if there are no such sides, which would make the number difficult to read, it should be affixed on some other part of the forward half of the vessel where it can be easily read.
- ▶ For Personal Watercraft (PWC), the numbers and stickers must also be affixed on each side of the forward half of the vessel on a non-removable portion of the hull.
- ▶ On inflatable boats or vessels so configured that a number will not properly adhere or cannot be clearly seen, it should be painted on or attached to a backing plate, along with the registration sticker.
- ▶ Any canoe, kayak, paddleboard, sailboard or non-motorized raft which is not required to be registered must be marked with the owner’s name and current address in a legible, clearly visible, and durable fashion. (CRS 33-13-103 (5))



**It is the boat owners responsibility to apply registration numbers to their vessel. These registration numbers can be painted on or purchased at your local marine dealer or hardware store.**

## Display of yearly validation sticker and registration number on a boat.



## Display of yearly validation sticker and registration number on small watercraft.



## Dealer Licenses

(CPW Regulation #201) The numbering requirements described by law shall apply to all motorboats and sailboats operated by manufacturers and dealers. The description of the motorboat or sailboat will be removed and the word “manufacturer” or “dealer” as appropriate will be plainly marked on each certificate. Dealers and manufacturers shall display the numbers on a detachable plate.

## Notification Requirements

(CRS 33-13-104 (3)) You are required to notify Colorado Parks and Wildlife whenever any of the following takes place:

- Your numbered vessel is lost, destroyed, or abandoned. The registration issued for the vessel shall be surrendered to Colorado Parks and Wildlife within fifteen days after any such event.
- Your address has changed. This notice must be given within 15 days.
- If your registration card is lost or destroyed you need to notify Colorado Parks and Wildlife in writing within 15 days describing the circumstances of the lost or destroyed registration card. The registration card will be replaced and accompanied by a fee of \$5.00 for a replacement registration card. 33-13-103(2)

# Before You Go



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## Education

Anyone operating a motorboat, which includes personal watercraft (PWC or “Jet Ski”), in Colorado must be at least 18 years old (CRS 33-13-107.1)\*



**\*As of June 1st, 2024 this law changes requiring the operator to be at least 18 years old, unless those 14 through 17 have successfully completed an approved boating safety course.**

Colorado Parks and Wildlife offers Boating Safely in Colorado classes and recommends that everyone takes a course. These classes fulfill the requirements for youth operation, but are open to any safety conscious boater. Not only will it help make you a safer boater, but it could also reduce your boat insurance! Registration for the required Boating Safety review sessions must be made by using our online registration at [cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety](https://cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety)

Colorado Parks and Wildlife will accept other state boating safety course certificates as long as their state laws are not less restrictive.

It is also important to note that no person shall permit or knowingly authorize a motorboat to be operated by a person under eighteen (18) years of age as of June 1st, 2024: except if he or she has met the boating safety and certificate requirements. (CRS 33-13-107.1(3))

**Please visit [cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety](https://cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety) for more information.**

## Weather

Before getting underway, check the latest local conditions such as weather, winds, flow levels, and hazards, including low-head dams. Detailed information can also be obtained by tuning to local radio stations or the National Weather Radio broadcasts on frequencies of 162.400, 162.425, 162.450, 162.475, 162.500, 162.525, 162.550.

## Fueling

Most fires happen after fueling. To prevent fires, follow these common sense rules.

- ✓ Don't smoke or strike matches.
- ✓ Shut off motors. Turn off electrical equipment.
- ✓ Close all windows, doors and openings.
- ✓ Take portable tanks out of the boat and fill them on the dock.
- ✓ Keep the filling nozzle in contact with the fill pipe tank.
- ✓ Wipe up any spilled gas with petroleum-absorbent pads. Discard the pads in a safe manner.
- ✓ Ventilate for at least 4 minutes. Make sure there is no odor of gasoline anywhere in the boat.
- ✓ Periodically check the system for fuel leaks.
- ✓ Visually check for leaks or fuel in the bilges.

## Boat Capacity

**(CPW Regulation #213)** Every single-hull vessel less than 20 feet in length, (except sailboats, canoes, kayaks, and inflatable boats) and the construction of which began after October 31, 1972 sold in Colorado, shall have a permanent writing affixed to the vessel which should state:

### ► For outboard boats:

(1) The maximum motor horsepower, the maximum persons capacity, and the maximum weight capacity in pounds.

### ► For inboard and inboard-outdrive boats:

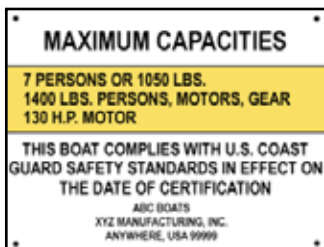
(1) The maximum persons capacity and the maximum weight capacity in pounds

### ► For boats rated for manual propulsion:

(1) The maximum person's capacity and the maximum weight capacity in pounds.

The required capacity information must be permanently displayed on a label or plate which is legible and clearly visible to the operator when underway.

Every vessel that is subject to United States Coast Guard manufacturing safety standards must permanently display certification label and plate.



Please be aware that it is unlawful for any person to remove or alter or tamper with the required capacity information or certification label of plate.

Boaters using vessels and personal watercraft without capacity plates should refer to the owner's manual and state law.

It is important to remember that when determining the maximum persons or pounds for your vessel it is whichever comes first.

## Loading

As the operator, it's your responsibility to see that supplies are carefully loaded and all passengers are properly seated. For safety onboard, remember to:

- ✓ Spread weight evenly.
- ✓ Fasten gear to prevent shifting.
- ✓ Keep passengers seated in designated seated areas.
- ✓ Don't overload your boat.



## CHECKLIST

1. File the Float Plan at the bottom of this page.
2. Give consideration to the basic safety items listed below.
3. Cancel your Float Plan when you return.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vessel in good condition | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra starting battery           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vessel properly loaded   | <input type="checkbox"/> Life jackets/throwable devices * |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ample supply of fuel     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguishers*              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check weather reports    | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual distress signals          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good anchoring equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Oars or paddles                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bailing device           | <input type="checkbox"/> Marine VHF radio                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spare parts              | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-aid kit            |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tools                    | <b>*Coast Guard-approved</b>                              |

## FLOAT PLAN

### OPERATOR INFORMATION

---

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

---

ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBER

### IF OVERDUE, CONTACT

---

#### NAME AND PHONE NUMBER OF RESCUE AGENCY NEAR POINT OF DEPARTURE

Searchers for an overdue boat have a much greater chance of being successful if the law enforcement or other rescue agencies have certain facts. For your own safety and before leaving on a cruise, complete this form and leave it with a reliable person who will notify authorities if necessary.

### VESSEL INFORMATION

---

NAME

CL#

LENGTH

---

POWER, INBOARD-OUTBOARD

RIG (IF SAIL)

HULL COLOR

---

TYPE/STYLE

RANGE

SPEED

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

---

# OF PERSONS ABOARD

RADIO FREQUENCIES

---

PLACE OF DEPARTURE

DATE/TIME OF DEPARTURE

---

CAR PARKED LICENSE

# TRAILER PARKED LICENSE#

WHERE PARKED

---

PLACE OF DESTINATION

STOPS EN ROUTE

DATE/TIME OF RETURN

DISCLAIMER: The Float Plan and checklist is not a definitive list of everything that may be required for safe boating on any particular boat or boating excursion. Knowing what is required is the responsibility of each individual boater.

**IMPORTANT: Don't forget to CANCEL your Float Plan when you return.**

# Navigation and Rules of the Road

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## **Federal Lateral System**

United States waterways are marked for safe navigation by the lateral system of buoyage. The system uses a simple arrangement of colors, shapes, numbers and light characteristics to show the side on which a buoy should be passed when proceeding in a given direction. The characteristics are determined by the buoy's position with respect to the navigable channels as the channels are entered from lakeward.

The expression "red right returning" has long been used by seafarers as a reminder that the red buoys are kept to the starboard (right) side when proceeding from the open lake into port (upstream). Likewise, green buoys are kept to the port (left) side.

Conversely, when proceeding toward the lake or leaving port, red buoys are kept to the port side and green buoys to the starboard side. Red buoys are always even numbered, and green buoys are odd numbered. Red and white vertically striped buoys mark the center of the channel.

## **Inland Waterway Marking System**

The waterway marking system in Colorado employs buoys and signs with distinctive standard shapes to show regulatory or advisory information. These markers are white with black letters and orange borders. They signify speed zones, restricted areas, danger areas and general information.

Aids to navigation on state waters use red and green ATONs to mark channel limits, generally in pairs. Your boat should pass between the red buoy and its companion green buoy.

- ▶ An orange diamond (on end) without a cross means: "Danger".
- ▶ An orange cross within an orange diamond (on end) means: "Boats Keep Out".
- ▶ An orange circle means: "Controlled Area".
- ▶ An orange square or rectangle is informational.
- ▶ Green ATONs (odd numbers) mark the left side, and red nun buoys (even numbers) mark the right side of a channel when proceeding upstream or returning from the main body of water.
- ▶ Diver down flag/Alpha Flag - Stay One hundred (100') from flag.
- ▶ Mooring Buoy- Only legal buoy you can tie to.

## Navigational Aid Examples



### Mooring to Buoys

Tying up to or hanging on to any navigation buoy (except a mooring buoy) or beacon is prohibited. For example of these types of buoys, see the chart above.

### Navigation Rules

The USCG Inland Navigation Rules, commonly called “Rules of the Road” govern the operation of boats and specify light and sound signals on inland waters in order to prevent collisions.

### Boater Responsibility






Nothing in the rules of the road shall exonerate the operator of a vessel from the consequences of neglecting to comply with inland rules of the road, or from neglecting any precaution which may be required by the ordinary practice of seaman, or by the special circumstances of the case.

Every boater should have a proper look-out which means at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.

In interpreting and complying with the inland rules of the road, due regard shall be had to all dangers of navigation and collision and to any special circumstances, including the limitations of the vessels involved, which may make departure from the rules of the road necessary to avoid immediate danger.

## Navigation Signals

The law prescribes signals for vessels in sight of each other to indicate the intended course of a vessel when necessary for safe navigation.

NAVIGATION SIGNALS	
 <b>1 BLAST</b>	Sounding one short blast (1 second) of the horn or whistle shows intention to direct course of vessel to starboard (right).
 <b>2 BLASTS</b>	Sounding two short blasts shows intention to direct course of vessel to port (left).
 <b>3 BLASTS</b>	Sounding three short blasts indicates the vessel's engines are going astern (in reverse).
 <b>5 BLASTS</b>	Sounding five or more short rapid blasts is a danger signal used when the other vessel's intentions are not understood or its indicated course is dangerous.
 <b>PROLONGED BLAST</b>	Sounding a prolonged blast (4 to 6 seconds) indicated restricted visibility.

## RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN VESSELS

**If 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, laying cable, or picking up navigation markers, or a vessel constrained by its draft, such as a large ship in a channel
- A vessel engaged in commercial fishing
- A sailing vessel unless it's overtaking

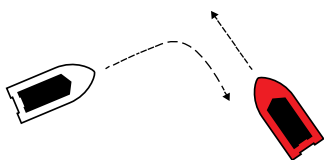
**If operating a sailing vessel, you must give way to:**

- Any vessel not under command
- Any vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver
- A vessel engages in commercial fishing

## Meeting or Crossing Situations

1 Short Blast

Give-way  
Vessel...  
*keeps out  
of way*



1 Short Blast

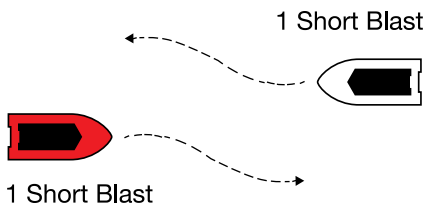
Stand-on  
Vessel...  
*holds course*

When motorboats are in sight of one another and meeting or crossing at a distance within half a mile of each other, each vessel shall indicate its intended maneuver with one of the following signals:

- ▶ One short blast = I intend to leave you on my port (left) side.
- ▶ Two short blasts = I intend to leave you on my starboard (right) side.
- ▶ Three short blasts = I am operating astern propulsion.

Upon hearing the one-or-two blast signal, the other vessel shall if in agreement, sound the same signal and take steps to affect a safe passing. If the proposed maneuver is unsafe, the danger signal (five or more short and rapid blasts) should be sounded, and each vessel shall take appropriate action until a safe passing agreement is made.

## Head-On Situation

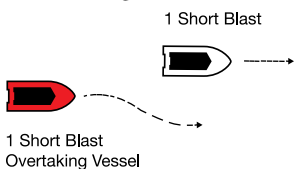


When meeting head-on, or nearly so, either vessel shall signal its intention with one short blast which the other vessel shall answer promptly. Both vessels should alter their course to starboard (right) so that each will pass to the port (left) side of each other.

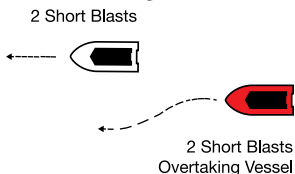
When crossing, the vessel that has the other on the starboard (right) side shall keep out of the way and avoid crossing ahead of the other vessel. The give-way vessel (the vessel required to keep out of the way) shall take early and substantial action to keep well clear of the other vessel (the stand-on vessel), which should hold course and speed. However, the stand-on vessel may take action to avoid collision by maneuvering as soon as it becomes apparent that the give-way vessel is not taking appropriate action.

## Overtaking Situations

### Overtaking to Starboard



### Overtaking to Port Side



When two motorboats are running in the same direction and the vessel astern desires to pass, it shall give one short blast to indicate a desire to pass on the overtaken vessel's starboard. The vessel ahead shall answer with one blast if the course is safe.

If the vessel astern desires to pass to port of the overtaken vessel, it shall give two short blasts. The vessel ahead shall answer with two short blasts if the course is safe. If passing is unsafe, the vessel being overtaken should answer with the danger signal (five or more short and rapid blasts).

A vessel approaching another vessel from the stern and overtaking it shall keep out of the way of the overtaken vessel. The vessel being overtaken shall hold its course and speed.

### Other Situations

If your boat nears a bend in a channel where vessels approaching from the other direction cannot be seen, you should signal with a prolonged blast (four to six seconds). Approaching boats within hearing should answer with the same signal. If your signal is answered by a boat on the farther side of the bend, then usual signals for meeting and passing should be given upon sighting. If your signal goes unanswered, the channel may be considered clear.

- ▶ Keep your boat to the starboard side of narrow channels whenever safe and practicable.
- ▶ Sound one prolonged blast when leaving a dock or berth.
- ▶ Keep out of the way of sailing vessels where courses involve the risk of collision.
- ▶ In narrow channels, do not hamper the safe passage of vessels such as deep-draft boats, which can navigate only inside such channels.

## **Rules for Sailing Vessels**

When two sailing vessels are approaching one another, one of them shall keep out of the way of the other so as to avoid the risk of collision, as follows:

- ▶ When each has the wind on a different side, the vessel with the wind on the port side shall keep out of the way of the other.
- ▶ When both have the wind on the same side, the vessel that is to the windward shall keep out of the way of the vessel that is to leeward.
- ▶ If a vessel with the wind on the port side sees a vessel to windward and cannot determine with certainty whether the other vessel has the wind on the port or the starboard side, they shall keep out of the way of the other.

The windward side shall be deemed to be the side opposite to that on which the mainsail is carried or, in the case of a square-rigged vessel, the side opposite to that on which the largest fore-and-aft sail is carried.

## **Responsibilities Between Vessels**

(CPW Regulation #219 (17)) Except where Colorado Parks and Wildlife regulations #219-9.,#219-10., and #219-12. Otherwise require:

**A motorboat underway shall keep out of the way of:**

- ▶ A vessel not under command
- ▶ A vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver
- ▶ A sailing vessel

**A sailing vessel underway shall keep out of the way of:**

- ▶ A vessel not under command
- ▶ A vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver

## **Fog Signals or vessels in restricted visibility**

(CPW Regulation #219 (18))The law also prescribes signals to identify vessels navigating in or near areas of restricted visibility. Upon hearing a fog signal apparently forward of the beam, you should reduce speed to the minimum at which the boat can be kept on course, unless it has been determined by radar or other means that the risk of collision does not exist. If necessary, use reverse propulsion. In any event navigate with extreme caution until any danger is over.



# Operational Law

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## Peace Officers

Every peace officer in the State of Colorado is empowered to enforce Colorado boating laws. These officers have the authority to stop and board any vessel where they have reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of law exists. (CRS 33-13-112(1))

Peace officers are also authorized to order the operator of an unsafe vessel to shore or to the nearest boat ramp if an unsafe condition is found that cannot be corrected on the spot and if the officer determines that continued operation would be dangerous.

Any vessel approaching, overtaking, being approached, or being overtaken by a moving law enforcement vessel operating with a siren or illuminated emergency lights, or any vessel approaching a stationary law enforcement vessel displaying illuminated emergency lights shall:

- ▶ Immediately slow to a speed sufficient to maintain steerage only.
- ▶ Alter its course, within its ability, so as not to inhibit or interfere with operation of the law enforcement vessel.
- ▶ Proceed, unless otherwise directed by the law enforcement vessel operator, at the reduced speed until beyond the law enforcement vessel's area of operation.

## Trailing

The Law prohibits you from towing a trailered vessel containing a passenger, except when you are launching or retrieving a vessel. (CRS 42-4-1405)

## Stolen Vessels

If a registered vessel is stolen, the owner or legal owner should notify local law enforcement as soon as possible. The owner shall also notify the local law enforcement agency if the vessel reported stolen is recovered.

## County and City Laws

In addition to state law, many counties and cities have special laws or ordinances that restrict activities in certain areas, prohibit certain acts at certain times or establish additional requirements. These ordinances may regulate speed, set aside specific areas or hours for special purposes, and prohibit acts that are contrary to public interest. Boaters must comply with these local rules as well as with state law. Check with your local county or city for special laws or ordinances in the area you intend to operate.

## Speed

(CPW Regulation #219) Every vessel shall at all times proceed at a safe speed so that proper and effective action can be taken to avoid a collision and so that the vessel may be stopped within a distance appropriate to prevailing circumstances and conditions.

In determining a safe speed the following factors should be taken into account by all vessels:

- ▶ The state of visibility
- ▶ The traffic density including concentration of fishing vessels or any other vessels
- ▶ The maneuverability of the vessel with special reference to stopping distance and turning ability in the prevailing conditions
- ▶ At night the presence of background light such as from shores lights or from back scatter of its own lights
- ▶ The state of wind, waves and current, and the proximity of navigational hazards
- ▶ The draft in relation to the available depth of water.
- ▶ The maximum speed limit in the State of Colorado is 40 Miles Per Hour.



**NEW REGULATION AS OF 10/01/2025**

### Engine Cut-Off Switch (ECOS)

(CPW Regulation #218.6) No person shall operate a Class A or Class 1 motorized vessel above a wakeless speed without wearing/using an Engine Cut-Off Switch (ECOS) that the vessel was manufactured with or has installed.

#### Exemptions:

- ▶ (i) The vessel's main helm is installed with an enclosed cabin
- ▶ (ii) The vessel/engine was not manufactured with an ECOS in accordance with ABYC standards prior to 2019.

## **Vessel Liveries**

(CRS 33-13-107) The owner or operator of a vessel livery shall keep a record of the

- ▶ Name and address of each person who hires any vessel that is designed or permitted to be operated as a vessel, the hull identification number of the vessel, and the departure date and time and the expected date and time of return of the vessel.
- ▶ Such records shall be preserved for at least thirty days after the vessel is to be returned and shall be subject to inspection by Colorado Parks and Wildlife.
- ▶ Neither the owner or operator of a vessel livery nor such owner's or operator's agent or employee shall permit any vessel to depart from his or her premises unless such vessel is equipped and registered as required by Colorado State Statute or Colorado Parks and Wildlife Regulations.

## **Careless or Imprudent Operation of a Vessel\***

(CRS 33-13-108) No person shall operate any vessel in a careless or imprudent manner without due regard for zoning, traffic, and other attended circumstances or as to endanger any person, property, or wildlife.

Examples of such operation include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Becoming airborne or completely leaving the water while crossing the wake of another vessel at an unsafe distance from the vessel creating the wake or when visibility around such vessel is obstructed.
- ▶ Unsafely weaving through vessel traffic.
- ▶ Operating at such speed and proximity to another vessel so as to require the operator of either vessel to abruptly swerve or to abruptly cut speed in order to avoid collision.

\*Any person who violates this section is guilty of a class 2 petty offense and, upon conviction shall be punished by a fine of two hundred (\$200) dollars.

## **Reckless Operation of a Vessel<sup>†</sup>**

No person shall operate any vessel in a reckless manner as to endanger any person, property, or wildlife.

Examples of such operation include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ “Spraying down” or “buzzing” other vessels.
- ▶ Playing “chicken” with other vessels.

<sup>†</sup>Any person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be punished by a fine of not less than two hundred (\$200) dollars nor more than seven hundred and fifty dollars (\$750), or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one hundred and twenty (120) days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

## **Prohibited Vessel Operation**

**(CRS 33-13-108 / CPW Regulation #218)** No person shall operate any vessel in such a manner as to create a wake when such waters or parts are posted by signs or marked by buoys prohibiting a wake<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>The term “wake” means a movement of the water created by a boat underway, great enough to disturb a boat at rest, but under no circumstances shall a boat underway exceed five (5) miles per hour while in a posted wakeless area. The term “above a wakeless speed” means operating any vessel in such a manner as to create a wake.

No person shall operate a vessel which passes within one hundred fifty feet (150') of any swimming area, moored vessel, person on shore engaged in fishing, or in a vessel engaged in servicing buoys or markings shall reduce the speed of the vessel in order to prevent the wash or wake of the vessel from causing damage or inconvenience.

No person shall operate or offer for rent any vessel which is overloaded, or unseaworthy, taking into consideration rated capacities, weather, type of construction, and other existing conditions.

No person shall operate or anchor a vessel within one hundred fifty feet (150') of any person on shore engaged in fishing, except where narrow passages or coves make such operation restrictions impractical.

No person shall operate a personal watercraft between one half hour after sunset and one half hour before sunrise.

No person shall operate a vessel under any condition (except in a sanctioned race or regatta) or in any manner that the vessel emits a sound level in excess of 86 decibels on the “A” weighted scale when measured from a distance of fifty feet (50') or more from the vessel. The operator of such vessel may be ordered off the water upon failure to submit to sound level testing procedures.

## Personal Watercraft Operation

A personal watercraft (PWC), popularly known as a jet ski, is a vessel 13 feet in length or less, propelled by machinery, that is designated to be operated by a person sitting, standing or kneeling on the vessel rather than in the conventional manner of sitting or standing inside the vessel. PWC's are subject to the same laws governing the operation of motorboats.

**Life Jackets:** Every person on board a PWC and anyone being towed behind a vessel must wear a US Coast Guard-approved life jacket that is inherently buoyant, proper fitting and in good and serviceable condition.

**Lanyard/Self-Circling Device:** The law requires anyone operating a PWC equipped with a lanyard cutoff switch to attach the lanyard to his or her person. Operating a PWC equipped with a self-circling device is prohibited if the device has been altered.

**Nighttime Operation Prohibited:** The law prohibits the operation of a PWC between one half hour after sunset to one half hour before sunrise, even if the PWC is equipped with proper navigational lights.



Please refer to page 12 for operational age requirements for Personal Watercraft.

## Towing water skis, aquaplanes, surfboards, innertubes or any similar devices

(CPW Regulation #223) When using a vessel to tow someone on water skis, aquaplanes, surfboards, innertubes or any similar devices there must be one other person in the boat - in addition to the operator - who can observe and is capable of relaying messages to the operator.

The towing of water skiers, aquaplanes, surfboards, inner tubes, and similar devices from sunset to sunrise is prohibited by state law.

## Life Jackets

(CPW Regulation #212) Colorado law provides that any person surfing or being towed on water skis, aquaplane, inner tube or similar device must wear a properly fitting United States Coast Guard Approved wearable personal flotation device\*. However a ski belt (preferably with at least two (2) straps and buckles) or a water sports jacket or foam wetsuit jacket will be accepted if there is an extra wearable personal flotation device aboard for each person as required.

\*Inflatable personal flotation devices are not approved for use while water skiing.

## Towing

Water skis, aquaplanes, surfboards, innertubes or any similar device must not be operated in a manner to endanger the safety of people or property. Passing the towline over another vessel or skier and towing a skier or navigating between a vessel and its tow are prohibited. Towing a skier does not give the vessel operator any special privileges. You must observe the rules of the road.

All motorized vessels in designated water ski areas shall travel in a counter clockwise direction, except in picking up a downed skier. The tow boat shall encircle the skier in such a manner as to keep him or her in view of the driver of the boat at all times. No person shall engage in water skiing, surfboarding, or similar activity one hundred fifty feet (150') of any harbor, swimming beach, or mooring area or any areas which are designated by posting or otherwise as being closed to water skiing except in areas designated as a ski take-off or landing area. (CPW Regulation #223)

Please turn off your motorized vessel while skiers are approaching or departing from your vessel.

### WATER SKIING HAND SIGNALS



## DIVING OR SKI FLAGS

### Water Ski Flag

(CPW Regulation #223) The operator of a vessel involved in towing a skier, aquaplanes, surfboards, inner tube, or similar devices must display, or cause to be displayed, a red or orange water ski flag to indicate:

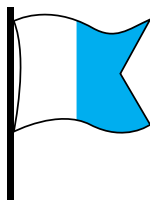
- ▶ A downed skier
- ▶ A skier in the water preparing to ski
- ▶ A ski line extended from the vessel
- ▶ A skier or equipment in the water in the vicinity of the vessel

The flag must be not less than twelve inches (12") on each side and be in the shape of a square or rectangle. The display of the ski flag does not in itself restrict the use of the water, but when operating in the area, boaters should exercise caution.

When the towed person is actively being towed and is not down in the water, and the associated equipment has been retrieved, the flag shall not be displayed.

### Alpha Flag

(CPW Regulation #223) Whenever the size of a vessel engaged in diving operations during daytime hours makes it impracticable to exhibit the shapes required of a vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver, a rigid replica of the international blue-and-white code flag (Alpha) is required to be displayed. The flag must measure not less than one (1) meter (3 ft. 3in.) in height and must be visible all around the horizon. Even with the Alpha Flag displayed it does not relieve the requirement that the driver's flag also be displayed at or near the point of submergence.



**ALPHA FLAG**  
Required for use by vessels engaged in diving operations and restricted in their ability to maneuver.

### Divers Down Flag

(CPW Regulation #223) State law recognizes that a red flag with a white diagonal stripe commonly called the divers down flag indicates a person engaged in diving in the immediate area.

In the State of Colorado every person in the water outside a designated swimming area using an underwater breathing device often known as scuba gear shall display a diver's down flag capable of being identified at a distance of not less than one hundred (100) yards.

The divers down flag shall be placed at or near the point of submergence and shall constitute a warning that a diver is submerged and may be within a radius of one hundred (100') feet from such a flag.

Vessels shall keep a distance of one hundred (100') feet from the diver's flag. Scuba divers shall keep a distance of one hundred feet (100') from dam outlet structures.



**DIVERS DOWN FLAG**  
Recognized for use by people engaged in diving.

**WATER SKIING FLAG**

## Operation of a Vessel While Intoxicated (BUI)

(CRS 33-13-108.1 / 33-13-110(3)(a)) Nationally alcohol and drug use continues to be the leading known contributing factor in recreational boating deaths in the United States. Alcohol and drug use is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating incidents; where the primary cause was known, it was listed as the leading factor in 23% of deaths.

In the State of Colorado no person shall operate any vessel, ride water skis, an aquaplane, a surfboard, an inner tube, or similar device while under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances or any combination of alcohol and any controlled substance or any other drug that renders the person incapable of safely operating a vessel.

No person of any age shall operate any vessel, ride water skis, an aquaplane, a surfboard, an inner tube, a stand-up paddleboard, or similar device who has 0.08 percent or more by weight, or alcohol in his or her blood. A person who has been arrested for operating a vessel may be requested to submit to a breath or blood test to determine blood-alcohol content. Refusal of a breath or blood test may be admissible into evidence at trial.

A person convicted of a misdemeanor operating a vessel while intoxicated could receive up to a one thousand dollar (\$1,000) fine and one (1) year in jail. They will also have their boating privileges suspended for three (3) months for their first conviction.

A person convicted of a misdemeanor to operate, manipulate, or ride water skis, an aquaplane, a surfboard, an inner tube, or any similar device could receive up to a \$1,000 dollar fine and one year in jail.



## Boat Incident Reporting

(CRS 33-13-109 / CPW Regulation #222) Boat operators involved in a collision, incident, or other casualty shall, so far as he/she can do so without serious danger to his own vessel, crew, and passenger, if any, render to other persons affected by the collision, incident, or casualty such assistance as may be practicable and necessary in order to save them from or to minimize any danger caused by the collision, incident, or other casualty, and he/she shall (1) provide their name, address and vessel registration number to other involved parties; (2) including the name and address of the owner if different from that of the operator in writing to any person injured and to the owner of any property damaged in the collision, incident, or other casualty (3) in case of a death or disappearance, report the incident without delay to law enforcement officials.

A vessel is considered to be involved in a boating incident whenever the occurrence results in any one of the following: Damage in excess of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) by or to the vessel or its equipment, or total loss of the vessel; injury requiring more than basic first aid; loss of life; or disappearance of any person from on board under circumstances which indicate the possibility of death or injury. Such boating incidents includes, but is not limited to:

- ▶ Capsizing
- ▶ Collision
- ▶ Flooding
- ▶ Fire
- ▶ Explosion (*continued on next page*)



- ▶ Disappearance of a boat other than by theft. Incidents for the purpose of the report are only those which occur on the water.

Boat operators or owners must submit a written boat incident report within 5 days to the Field Services Branch (Boating Safety Program) of Colorado Parks and Wildlife at 13787 US Highway 85 N, Littleton, Colorado 80125.

Contact your local CPW office for a current Boat Incident Report Form.

Boat Incident Reports shall contain the following information:

- ▶ The number assigned to each vessel involved;
- ▶ The locality, time and date of the incident;
- ▶ The weather conditions existing at the time of the incident;
- ▶ The name, address, and age of each operator of a vessel involved in the incident;
- ▶ The name and address of the owner of each vessel involved in the incident;
- ▶ The name and address of any person who is injured or killed as the result of the incident;
- ▶ The nature and extent of injury to any person;
- ▶ A description of any property damage;
- ▶ A description of how the incident occurred;
- ▶ The type of vessel that is the subject of the report;
- ▶ The name and address, if known of any witness to the incident.

### **Authority to close water**

(CRS 33-13-111) Any parks and wildlife officer or other peace officer as defined in CRS 33-10-102 has the authority to close water and to prohibit the operation of vessels on any waters of the state and ordering the removal of vessels from any waters of the state when such operation constitutes or may constitute a hazard to human life or safety.

- ▶ A state of disaster emergency pursuant to section 24-32-2104 or 24-32-2109, C.R.S.;
- ▶ Disaster relief efforts that are underway and that may include debris removal;
- ▶ An incident or other emergency occurs in or immediately adjacent to the water body;

- ▶ Rescue efforts for victims are actively underway and such efforts would be hindered by additional waterway traffic, or
- ▶ Active construction or transportation projects authorized under state or federal law

### **False Reporting Search and Rescue Calls**

**(CRS 18-8-111)** Any individual who reports to a state or local agency that an emergency exists, knowing that the report is false, is guilty of a misdemeanor and can be found liable for the expense of the emergency response. An emergency includes any condition that results in, or could result in the response of a public official in an authorized emergency vehicle, vessel or aircraft.

It is a felony for any individual to report or cause any report to be made to any state or local government agency that an emergency exists if he or she knows or should know that the response to the report is likely to cause death or serious bodily injury and such injury or death is sustained by any person as a result of the false report.



# Required Equipment

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## General Information

Recreational vessels are required to carry specified safety equipment, which may vary according to type of propulsion, type of construction, area and time of use, and number of people aboard. Unless otherwise noted, all required equipment must be:

- ✓ U.S. Coast Guard-approved,
- ✓ Kept in good, serviceable condition,
- ✓ Readily accessible,
- ✓ Of the proper type and/or size.

Recreational vessels may carry extra equipment that is not U.S. Coast Guard-approved, provided that minimum requirements for approved equipment are satisfied. For equipment purposes, sailboats, canoes, rowboats and inflatable rafts equipped with motors are considered to be “motorboats.” Requirements vary considerably for commercial vessels and vessels engaged in racing.

■ For a list of recommended additional equipment, see the chart on page 50.



## **Sailboats and Manually Propelled Vessels**

**Life jackets:** Vessels less than 16 feet in length and all paddleboards, canoes, kayaks, sailboards or non-motorized rafts regardless of length, need wearable Coast Guard-approved life jacket of a type and size appropriate for the conditions and the boating activity being engaged in must be carried for each person aboard. Life jackets must be readily accessible and of an appropriate size for the intended wearer.

Sailboard operators may elect to wear, at their own risk, in lieu of carrying a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device, a wetsuit constructed of nylon covered neoprene or similar material that covers the full torso of the wearer. The wetsuit shall be capable of providing flotation to the wearer, when at rest on the surface of the water. (CPW Regulation #212(6))

Vessels sixteen (16) feet and over must have one U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket of a type and size appropriate for the conditions and the boating activity being engaged in for each person aboard, plus at least one Type IV throwable flotation device. The throwable device must be kept where it is immediately available. Life jackets must be readily accessible and fit the intended wearer properly.

**Navigation Lights:** All vessels are required to display navigation lights between sunset and sunrise and during times of restricted visibility. In inland and international waters, sailing vessels under sail alone shall exhibit navigation lights shown on page 47. The tricolored lantern and the all-round green and red lights should never be used together.

A sailing vessel of less than 22' 9" (7 meters) in length shall, if practicable, exhibit those lights prescribed or have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision. A vessel under oars may display those lights prescribed for sailing vessels or have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light, which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision.

**Identification:** All paddleboards, canoes, kayaks, sailboards or non-motorized rafts must be marked with the owner's name and current address in a legible, clearly visible, and durable fashion. (33-13-103(5))

**Sound Signaling Devices:** (CPW Regulation #208) Every vessel, (except hand-propelled vessels when on whitewater) of Class A, 1, or 2 must have on board a sound-producing device for signaling. Such a device may be operated by mouth, hand, or power and it must be able to produce the navigational signals under rules of the road.

## **Motorboats Less Than 16 Feet in Length (Class A)**

**Life jackets:** One wearable Coast Guard-approved life jacket of a type and size appropriate for the conditions and the boating activity being engaged in must be carried for each person on board. Life jackets must be readily accessible and fit the intended wearer properly.

**Fire Extinguisher:** One Type B-I Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher in good and serviceable condition must be carried when no fixed fire extinguishing system is installed in machinery spaces.

Extinguishers are not required for outboard motorboats less than 26 feet in length and of **open construction**. No portable extinguishers are required if an approved, fixed fire extinguishing system is installed in machinery spaces. (CPW Regulation #211)

**Backfire Flame Arrestor:** A Coast Guard-approved backfire flame arrestor is required for inboard gasoline motors that are not exposed to the atmosphere above the gunwale level.

**Muffling System:** An effective muffling system is required for the exhaust of each internal combustion engine. Unmodified outboards usually meet legal requirements (see page 46).

**Ventilation System:** See page 46.

**Sound Signaling Devices:** (CPW Regulation #208) Every vessel, except hand-propelled vessels when on whitewater, must have on board a sound-producing device for signaling. Such a device may be operated by mouth, hand, or power and it must be able to produce the navigational signals under rules of the road.

**Navigation Lights:** Navigation lights must be kept in serviceable condition and displayed between sunset and sunrise and at times of restricted visibility. For motorboats operating during these times, see page 47.

## **Motorboats 16 Feet to Less Than 26 Feet in Length (Class 1)**

**Life jackets:** One wearable Coast Guard-approved life jacket of a type and size appropriate for the conditions and the boating activity being engaged in must be carried for each person aboard. Life jackets must be readily accessible and of an appropriate size for the intended wearer. In addition, the vessel must carry an approved Type IV throwable device, which should be immediately available.

**Fire Extinguisher:** One Type B-I Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher in good and serviceable condition must be carried when no fixed fire extinguishing system is

installed in machinery spaces.

Extinguishers are not required for outboard motorboats less than 26 feet in length and of open construction. No portable extinguishers are required if an approved fixed fire extinguishing system is installed in machinery spaces.

**Backfire Flame Arrestor:** A Coast Guard-approved backfire flame arrestor is required for inboard gasoline motors that are not exposed to the atmosphere above the gunwale level.

**Muffling System:** An effective muffling system is required for the exhaust of each internal combustion engine. Unmodified outboards usually meet legal requirements (see page 46).

**Ventilation System:** see page 46.

**Sound Signaling Devices:** Every vessel, except hand-propelled vessels when on whitewater, must have on board a sound-producing device for signaling. Such a device may be operated by mouth, hand, or power and it must be able to produce the navigational signals under rules of the road.

**Navigation Lights:** Navigation lights must be kept in serviceable condition and displayed between sunset and sunrise and at times of restricted visibility. For motorboats operating during these times, see page 47.

## **Motorboats 26 Feet to Less Than 40 Feet in Length (Class 2)**

**Life jackets:** One wearable Coast Guard-approved life jacket of a type and size appropriate for the conditions and the boating activity being engaged in must be carried for each person aboard. Life jackets must be readily accessible and properly fit the intended wearer. In addition, the vessel must carry an approved Type IV throwable flotation device, which should be immediately available.

**Fire Extinguisher:** Two Type B-I or one Type B-II Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher in good and serviceable condition must be carried when no fixed fire extinguishing system is installed in machinery spaces. With a fixed system in the machinery space, one Type B-I fire extinguisher must be carried.

**Backfire Flame Arrestor:** A Coast Guard-approved backfire flame arrestor is required for inboard gasoline motors that are not exposed to the atmosphere above the gunwale level.

**Muffling System:** An effective muffling system is required for the exhaust of each internal combustion engine. Unmodified outboards usually meet legal requirements (see page 46).

**Ventilation System:** See page 46.

**Sound Signaling Devices:** Every vessel, except hand-propelled vessels when on whitewater, must have on board a sound-producing device for signaling. Such a device may be operated by hand or power and it must be able to produce the navigational signals under rules of the road. Such device shall be audible for a distance of at least one (1) mile. This vessel must have a bell which when struck, produces a clear, bell-like tone of full round characteristics. (CPW Regulation #208).

**Navigation Lights:** Navigation lights must be kept in serviceable condition and displayed between sunset and sunrise and at times of restricted visibility. For motorboats operating during these times, see page 47.

### **Motorboats 40 Feet to 65 Feet in Length (Class 3)**

**Life jackets:** One wearable Coast Guard-approved life jacket of a type and size appropriate for the conditions and the boating activity being engaged in must be carried for each person aboard. Life jackets must be readily accessible and properly fit the intended wearer. In addition, the vessel must carry an approved Type IV throwable flotation device, which should be immediately available.

**Fire Extinguisher:** Three B-I or one B-I and one B-II Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher in good and serviceable condition must be carried when no fixed fire extinguishing system is installed in machinery spaces. With a fixed system in the machinery space, two Type B-I or one Type B-II extinguisher must be carried.

**Backfire Flame Arrestor:** A Coast Guard-approved backfire flame arrestor is required for inboard gasoline motors that are not exposed to the atmosphere above the gunwale level.

**Muffling System:** An effective muffling system is required for the exhaust of each internal combustion engine. Unmodified outboards usually meet legal requirements (see page 46).

**Ventilation System:** See page 46.

**Sound Signaling Devices:** Every vessel, except hand-propelled vessels when on whitewater, must have on board a sound-producing device for signaling. Such a device may be operated by hand or power and it must be able to produce the navigational signals under rules of the road. Such device shall be audible for a distance of at least one half (1.5) mile. This vessel shall have a bell which when struck, produces a clear, bell-like tone of full round characteristics. (CPW Regulation #208)

**Navigation Lights:** Navigation lights must be kept in serviceable condition and displayed between sunset and sunrise and at times of restricted visibility. For motorboats operating during these times, see page 47.

## **Life Jackets**

**(CPW Regulation #212)** All boats, powered or non-powered, must carry at least one wearable U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket (also called a personal flotation device or PFD) for every person aboard. Life jackets bearing U.S. Coast Guard approval are identified by Types I, II, III, or V. Coast Guard approval is shown by a stencil marking or tag on the life jacket. This tag or marking shows the name and address of the manufacturer, the U.S. Coast Guard approval number and the intended use. It also shows the amount of flotation in the device and the type (I, II, III, IV or V). Failure to have a sufficient number of approved flotation devices aboard constitutes a violation of state and federal law.

Colorado boating law requires that all wearable Type I, II, III and V life jackets must be readily accessible and all Type IV (throwable) flotation devices must be immediately available. They must be kept in serviceable condition. If they are torn, damaged, rotted, punctured, or otherwise unserviceable, they no longer meet legal requirements and should be replaced.

The minimum requirements are:

- ▶ All boats 16 feet or more in length, except canoes and kayaks: One wearable Coast Guard-approved life jacket (Type I, II, III or V) for each person on board and one throwable (Type IV) device in each boat.
- ▶ Canoes and kayaks of any length and all other boats less than 16 feet in length: A single wearable Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, III or V life jacket for each person on board.

In Colorado it is a class 2 petty offense, punishable by a fine of up to one hundred dollars (\$100), to operate a vessel of any length unless every child under 13 years of age on board is wearing a proper fitting Type I, II, III or V Coast Guard-approved life jacket. Except when:

- ▶ Below deck.
- ▶ In an enclosed cabin.

*Continued on page 42*

## TYPE I-III LIFE JACKETS AND FLOTATION DEVICES



### TYPE I: Offshore Life Jacket

- Intended for offshore boating as well as open water and coastal cruising
- Offers the most flotation and is the most effective life jacket in rough waters
- May help prevent hypothermia
- Designed to turn an unconscious wearer face up
- Bulky



### TYPE II: Near-shore Buoyant Vest

- Intended for calm, inland water
- May turn unconscious wearer face up
- Good for non-swimmers
- Provides good flotation
- Less bulky than offshore vests



### TYPE III: Children's Life Jacket

- Intended general recreational boating
- Designed for mobile immersion
- May not turn unconscious wearer face up
- May have special safety features for children
- May be a hybrid that is inherently buoyant and can inflate



Vest-type flotation Jacket

### TYPE III: Flotation Aids

- Intended for fishing, hunting, canoeing, kayaking, water skiing or other high-impact, high-speed activities
- Designed for possible immersion
- May not turn unconscious wearer face up
- Rugged construction



Manual Inflation

## TYPE IV & V LIFE JACKETS AND FLOTATION DEVICES



### TYPE IV: Throwable Flotation Devices

- Intended to be thrown to someone who has fallen overboard
- Designed to be grasped and held by user until he or she is rescued
- Not a wearable life jacket



### TYPE V: Special Use Device

- Required to be worn for special uses or conditions
- Made for specific activities such as sail boarding or rafting
- Designed for use with deck suits, work vests, hybrid PFDs and others as marked on the label
- Must follow Coast Guard label for wear and use



### TYPE V: Special Use Device

Available in two types:

- **Automatic** (inflates automatically upon immersion or when manually activated)
- **Belt Pack** (only inflates when manually activated; must be placed over head once activated)
- Easy to wear, comfortable and cool
- Not approved for children under 16
- Not intended for sports where immersion is expected



Regardless of the “Type” shown on a flotation device, ALL life jackets shall be used in accordance with the Coast Guard approval statement for intended use and manufacturer’s instructions.

Colorado boating law does not require wearing life jackets while aboard a vessel, other than as noted in the requirements above and those for some Type V life jackets and for children under age 13. Colorado Parks and Wildlife encourages that all boaters wear life jackets. All wearable life jackets must properly fit the intended wearer. Check the manufacturer's label on the life jacket for the intended use, size restrictions and instructions on how to wear the life jacket.

**Inflatable Life Jackets:**

The U.S. Coast Guard approved inflatable life jackets in 1996. However, only certain brands are Coast Guard-approved, and some must be worn to be approved. Please review the owner's manual and information pamphlet carefully before purchasing this type of life jacket. While activation upon impact is not a required feature, inflatables must be equipped at a minimum with both manual (pull) and oral (blow) inflation systems. Inflatable life jackets must have a full cylinder and all status indicators on the inflator must be green to satisfy requirements. Inflatables are not recommended for non-swimmers and are not intended for use while participating in tow or whitewater paddle sports, or while on a personal watercraft (PWC).

**Personal Watercraft:** Every person on board a PWC and anyone being towed behind a vessel must wear a US Coast Guard-approved life jacket.

**New CAN/US Life Jacket Label:** On October 22, 2014 the United States Coast Guard issued a final rule entitled Personal Flotation Devices Labeling and Standards, which removes references to type codes which we commonly know as Type I,II,III, IV or V. in its regulations on the carriage and labeling of USCG-approved personal flotation devices (PFDs). The purpose of this was to facilitate future incorporation by reference of new industry consensus standards for PFD labeling that more effectively convey safety information, and is a step toward harmonization regulations with PFD requirements in Canada and in other countries.



It's important to know the United States Coast Guard Life jackets you may already own may have the old "type" life jacket label (Type 1-Type V). The new label DOES NOT make your life jackets with the old label obsolete. You can continue to use your life jacket as long as they are still in good condition, proper fitting and appropriate for the activity. However, these new labels are beginning to enter the market and you should be aware of the upcoming changes.

The new label is broken into two separate terms known as "wearable" and "throwable". The new life jackets with the new label have performance icons and are measured in newtons.

- ▶ Lower level numbers offer more mobility, comfort, and style with good flotation, and are intended for near shore (calm water) activities.
- ▶ Higher level numbers offer greater flotation, turning, and stability in the water, and are intended for offshore activities (greater time to rescue).

There are areas where you may be boating near shore when rescue is hours away, and a higher level is needed.

Be honest about your swimming ability. Poor swimmers may need a higher level to stay upright and easily tread water.

Remember all life jackets will have a United States Coast Guard approval number on them.

For more information please visit [wearitlifejacket.com](http://wearitlifejacket.com).



Below you will find an example of what a new United States Coast Guard life jacket label will look like.



## Fire Extinguishers

All fire extinguishing equipment must be U.S. Coast Guard approved, fully charged, and in good and serviceable condition.

### Good and Serviceable condition means:

- (i) If the fire extinguisher has a pressure gauge reading or indicator it must be in the operable range or position;
- (ii) The lock pin is firmly in place;
- (iii) The discharge nozzle is clean and free of obstruction;
- (iv) Does not appear to have been previously used;
- (v) The extinguisher does not show visible signs of significant corrosion or damage; and
- (vi) Non-rechargeable fire extinguishers shall be removed from service at the maximum interval of 12 years from the date of manufacture.

**Please note:** All recreational vessels of model year 2018 and newer must carry 5-B or 20-B rated fire extinguishers that are date stamped. Vessels older than model year 2018 may carry either 5-B or 20-B rated fire extinguishers that, if portable, are either not date stamped or not more than 12 years old or B-I or B-II rated fire extinguishers that are in good and serviceable condition. **See tables below.**

### When should I replace my disposable (non-rechargeable) marine fire extinguisher?

Disposable (non-rechargeable) dry chemical fire extinguishers, must be removed 12 years after their date of manufacture. These extinguishers generally have their year of manufacturing.

#### BOAT MODEL YEAR 2018 AND NEWER

NOTE: may carry only 5-B or 20-B rated fire extinguishers with date stamp.

LENGTH (FEET)	Minimum number of 5-B rated portable fire extinguishers required <sup>1</sup>	
	<i>If no fixed fire extinguishing system in machinery space</i>	<i>If fixed fire extinguishing system in machinery space</i>
Under 16	1	0
16 but less than 26	1	0
26 but less than 40	2	1
40 up to 65	3	2

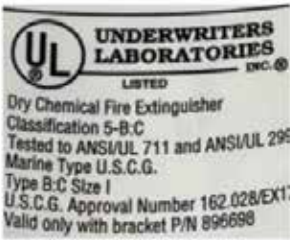
<sup>1</sup>One 20-B, rated portable fire extinguisher may be substituted for two 5-B portable fire extinguishers. One 10-B is not a substitute for two 5-B

## What is the difference between a rechargeable and non-rechargeable portable fire extinguisher?

A non-rechargeable fire extinguisher, also referred to as a disposable fire extinguisher, is intended for one-time use only. A rechargeable fire extinguisher is recharged once used. A rechargeable portable fire extinguisher requires regular maintenance and servicing; a disposable does not. A disposable must be removed from service after 12 years from date of manufacturing stamped on the bottle.

## Where do I find the date of manufacturing on a rechargeable fire extinguisher?

The date of manufacturing on a rechargeable fire extinguisher is printed on the label of the bottle. The first National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) certified inspection is due one year from the date of manufacturing and the bottle tag must indicate this inspection. A rechargeable does not need to be removed from service after 12 years, but it instead must be maintained annually by a certified technician.



Label Example



Date stamp Example

BOAT MODEL YEAR BETWEEN 1953 AND 2017		
NOTE: may carry only 5-B, 20-B rated fire extinguishers with date stamp or B-1, B-11 rated fire extinguishers		
LENGTH (FEET)	Minimum number of B-1/5-B or B/11/20B rated portable fire extinguishers required <sup>2</sup>	
	<i>If no fixed fire extinguishing system machinery in space</i>	<i>If fixed fire extinguishing system machinery in space</i>
Under 16	1	0
16 but less than 26	1	0
26 but less than 40	2	1
40 up to 65	3	2

<sup>2</sup>One 20-B/B-11, rated portable fire extinguisher may be substituted for two 5-B/B-1 portable fire extinguishers. One 10-B is not a substitute for two 5-B.

## **Muffling and Sound Level Systems**

(CPW Regulation #220) No person shall operate a vessel that emits a sound level in excess of 86 decibels on the “A” weighted scale when measured from a distance of fifty feet (50’) or more from the vessel.

Except in the case of a motorboat competing in a sanctioned race or regatta, it is unlawful to use a vessel propelled in whole or in part by gas, gasoline, or naphtha unless the vessel is provided with a stock factory muffler underwater or other device capable of adequately muffling the sounds of the exhaust of the engine.

The phrase “adequate muffling” means that the motor’s exhaust at all times is muffled or suppressed as not to create excessive noise.

The operator of such vessel may be ordered off the water upon failure to submit to sound level testing procedures.

## **Ventilation Systems**

All motorboats or motor vessels, except open boats, made after 1940 and using gasoline as a fuel must have at least two ventilator ducts fitted with cowls or their equivalent for the efficient removal of explosive or flammable gases from all engine and fuel tank compartment bilges. If engine and fuel tank compartments are closed and separated, two such ventilation systems are required.

At least one exhaust duct must be installed to extend from the open atmosphere to the lower portion of the bilge, and at least one intake duct must be installed to extend to a point at least midway to the bilge (or at least below the carburetor air intake level). The cowls must be located and trimmed for maximum effectiveness to prevent displaced fumes from being recirculated.

Boats built after July 31, 1980, that have a gasoline engine for electrical generation, mechanical power or propulsion must be equipped with an operable ventilation system.

- ▶ A compartment containing a permanently installed gasoline engine must either be open to the atmosphere or ventilated by an exhaust blower system.
- ▶ The intake duct for an exhaust blower must be in the lower one-third of the compartment and above the normal level of accumulated bilge water.
- ▶ A combination of more than one exhaust blower may be used to meet specified requirements. Boats equipped with either outboard motors or “open” construction inboard motors (i.e., not enclosed) are exempt from ventilation requirements.

## Two-Stroke Engines

There is no statewide prohibition on the use of high emission two-stroke vessel engines.

## Backfire Flame Control Devices

Backfire flame control devices are designed to prevent open flame from leaving the carburetion system in the event of a backfire. Vessels equipped with gasoline engines, except outboard motors, must have one of the following backfire flame control devices installed on the engine. These can be either:

- ✓ Coast Guard-approved backfire flame arrestor, suitably secured to the air intake with a flame-tight connection
- ✓ Backfire flame arrestor marked “SAE-1928” or “UL 1111” and suitably secured to the air intake with a flame-tight connection
- ✓ Approved engine air and fuel induction system that provides adequate protection from propagation of backfire flame to the atmosphere, equivalent to that provided by an acceptable backfire flame arrestor
- ✓ Flame-tight metallic carburetor air intake attachment, located or positioned so backfire flames would be dispersed to the atmosphere outside the vessel

Note: This last device listed must be acceptable to the Coast Guard and designed so that flames will not endanger the vessel, people on board, or nearby vessels and structures.



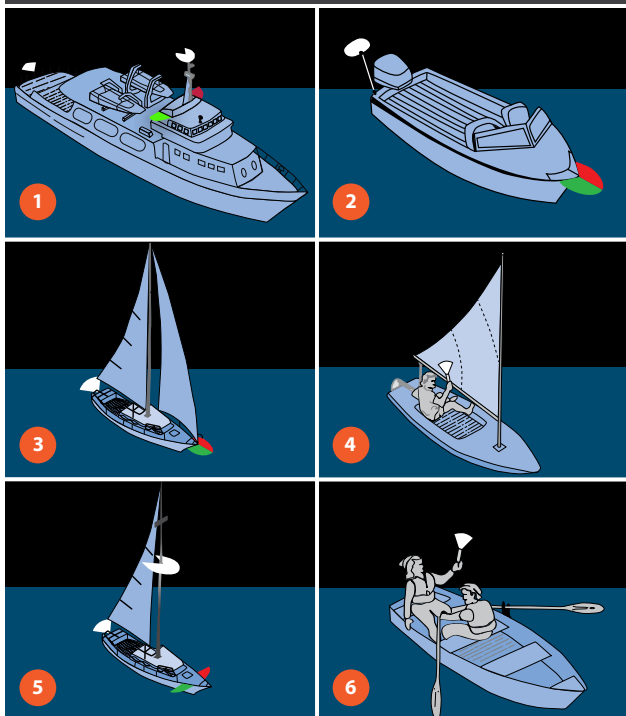
© ALEKSEI / ADOBE STOCK

## Navigation Lights

(CPW Regulation #207) Operating a boat at night without lights is not only dangerous, but is against the law. Navigation lights make it possible for boat operators to properly interpret and react to the movements of other boats in darkness. Note: If a boat is used exclusively in the daylight hours and not during periods of restricted visibility, navigation lights are not required.

All vessels must show the required lights between sunset and sunrise and during periods of restricted visibility. Light requirements vary based on vessel length and propulsion type. In most cases, requirements for a particular vessel are the same under both inland and international rules.

## NIGHT BOATING NAVIGATION LIGHTS



### Power Driven Vessels

A recreational motor-powered vessel underway is required to display a masthead light forward, red and green sidelights, and a sternlight, as indicated in image **1**

A recreational powerboat under 39 feet 4 inches (12 meters) may instead display a 360 degree all-round sternlight and combination red and green sidelights as indicated in image **2**

### Sailing Vessels and Vessels Under Oars

Light requirements for such vessels are as follows:

- ▶ A sailing vessel operating under power of sail only must exhibit sidelights and a sternlight as indicated in image **3**
- ▶ In a sailing vessel of less than twenty (20) meters in length the lights may be combined in one lantern carried at or near the top of the mast where it can best be seen.
- ▶ A sailing vessel of less than 22' 9" (7 meters) in length must, if practicable, exhibit sidelights and a sternlight or lighted lantern showing a white light, which must be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision as indicated in image **4**

- ▶ A sailing vessel operating under machinery power only, or under power and sails, is considered a power-driven vessel and must display the proper lights for a powerboat as indicated in image **5**
- ▶ A vessel under oars may display those lights prescribed for sailing vessels or have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light, which must be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision as indicated in image **6**

The navigation lights described above are the most common, but boaters operating at night should be aware that there are other possible combinations of lights.

- ▶ **Anchor Lights:** An anchor light is an all-round white light exhibited where it can best be seen and is visible for two miles.
- ▶ Every vessel less than twenty (20) meters (65' 8") in length must display one all-round white light when anchored.
- ▶ Flashing red or blue lights are prohibited on all vessels, except emergency or law enforcement vessels.
- ▶ A sailing vessel underway may exhibit at or near the top of the mast, where they can best be seen, two all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being red and the lower green, but these lights shall not be exhibited in conjunction with the combined lantern.

## Marine Sanitation Devices

(CPW Regulation #214) No person shall maintain or operate upon the waters any vessel which is equipped with a marine sanitary device unless such water closet is self-contained and incapable of discharging directly into the water. It is unlawful to deposit or discharge human waste or other refuse into the water.



## RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

ITEMS E = Essential D = Desirable N/A = Not App	Less than 16 ft.			16 ft. to 26 ft.			26 ft. to 40 ft.			40 ft. to 65 ft.		
	Open Waters	Semi-protected	Protected	Open Waters	Semi-protected	Protected	Open Waters	Semi-protected	Protected	Open Waters	Semi-protected	Protected
Anchor, cable (line, chain, etc.)	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Bailing Device (pump, etc.)	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Boat Hook	-	-	-	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Distress Signals*	E	E	D	E	E	D	E	E	E	E	E	E
Emergency Drinking Water	E	D	-	E	D	-	E	D	-	E	D	-
Fenders	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
First Aid Kit and Manual (10- to 20-unit)	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Flashlight	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Heaving Line	-	-	-	-	-	-	D	D	D	D	D	D
Light List	D	D	-	E	E	D	E	E	E	E	E	E
Local Chart(s)	E	D	-	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Mirror (for signaling)	D	D	-	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Mooring Lines	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Motor oil and grease (extra supply)	-	-	-	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Oars, spare	E	E	E	E	E	E	-	-	-	-	-	-
Radio Detection Finder	-	-	-	D	-	-	D	-	-	D	-	-
Radio, Telephone, EPIRB	D	-	-	D	D	-	D	D	-	D	D	-
Ring buoy(s) (additional)	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Shear pins (if used)	E	E	D	E	E	D	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depth sounding device (lead line, etc.)	D	D	-	D	D	D	E	E	E	E	E	E
Spare batteries	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Spare Parts	E	D	-	E	E	D	E	E	D	E	E	D
Tables, current	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	D	D	-	E	E
Tools	E	D	-	E	E	D	E	E	D	E	E	D

\*Distress signal devices are required on coastal waters on certain sized boats or during certain times.

# Environmental Boating Guidelines

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## **Boater Responsibility**

Boaters play an important role in protecting the health of Colorado's waterways. Boat sewage, greywater, cleaning products, spilled fuel and oil, trash and aquatic invasive species are all potential sources of pollution. The government alone cannot protect Colorado's environment. Every boater must take responsibility for pollution prevention and try to minimize the environmental and public health impacts from boating activities.

## **Boat Maintenance**

Products used to wash boat hulls and decks often contain toxic ingredients that are harmful to the marine environment. Degreasers dry the natural oils that fish need for their gills to take in oxygen. Underwater hull cleaning can leave toxic paint residues in harbor sediments.

- ▶ Limit in-water maintenance and perform cleaning where debris can be captured and disposed of properly. Marina tenants should check whether or not their marina has established guidelines for the type of boat maintenance work that can be done in the slip.
- ▶ Purchase greener alternatives that are water-based, biodegradable, phosphate-free, and/or less toxic.
- ▶ Do not sand in heavy wind. Sand with vacuum sanders or grinders (not steel wool), which automatically collect and store paint, varnish, or wood dust before it can get into the marine environment (or eyes or lungs). Some boat yards have these tools for rent.
- ▶ Avoid products with phosphates, ammonia, lye, sodium hypochlorite (bleach), chlorinated hydrocarbons (methylene chloride, perchloroethylene, or trichloroethylene), and petroleum distillates.
- ▶ Keep absorbents or rags within reach to wipe up spills.
- ▶ Suspend a tarp or polyethylene sheet between the boat and the dock to catch any spills, dust, or debris that would otherwise end up in the water.
- ▶ Consider alternative, non-biocide hull coatings that contain no tributyltin, heavy metals such as copper and zinc or biocides. Clean the bottom with a soft, non-abrasive sponge. Use hull cleaning companies who use green management practices using non-abrasive scrubbing agents.

## ALTERNATIVES TO TOXIC PRODUCTS

TOXIC PRODUCT	ALTERNATIVE
Detergent and Soap	Use fresh water and a lot of elbow grease
Bleach	Try hydrogen peroxide
Scouring Powders	Use baking soda or salt
Floor Cleaner	Mix 1 cup vinegar in 2 gallons water
Window Cleaner	Mix 1 cup vinegar in 1 quart warm water
Varnish Cleaner	Mix 1/2 cup vinegar and 1/2 water
Head Cleaner	Brush with baking soda
Shower Cleaner	Wet surface and use scouring cloth with baking soda
Aluminum Cleaner	Mix 2 tablespoons cream of tartar in 1 quart water
Chrome Cleaner/Polish	Clean with apple cider vinegar, polish with baby oil
Fiberglass Stain Removal	Make baking soda paste
Drain Opener	Disassemble and replace; avoid toxic products
Mildew Remover	Make paste of equal parts lemon juice and salt
Wood Polish	Mix 3 parts olive oil and 1 part white vinegar, or use almond or olive oil (interior unvarnished wood only)

### Oil and Gas

Oil and gasoline contain hydrocarbons and heavy metals that pollute and are toxic to aquatic life. Oil can coat the feathers and fur of wildlife, destroying their natural insulation from cold. Once ingested, oil moves up the food chain from tiny plankton to fish, birds and even humans, and can cause reproductive problems, weakness and death.

Even a thin film of oil can kill aquatic organisms that live near the water's surface. The cumulative effect of small spills has a serious impact on coastal and inland waters.

To prevent pollution from oil and gas spills and help maintain a healthy and aesthetically pleasing recreational environment for boaters and others:

- ▶ Use caution when filling your fuel tank and don't top off. Know the capacity of your tank and leave it at least 10 percent empty.
- ▶ Catch fuel drips with an absorbent pad. Properly dispose of saturated absorbents at a hazardous waste disposal location.

- ▶ Don't hose down gas spills or apply detergents or soaps to remove fuel or oil sheen in the water. Using soap for this purpose is both bad for the environment and illegal.
- ▶ Install fuel tank vent whistles or fuel/air separators (available at any marine supply store) to avoid spills.
- ▶ Inspect fuel lines and hoses periodically. Replace as needed.
- ▶ Use funnels for pouring oil and keep a supply of oil absorbent pads onboard for cleaning up spills.
- ▶ Dispose of used oil and drained oil filters at a waste oil recycling center.
- ▶ If a spill occurs, notify marina management immediately.
- ▶ Keep oil and fuel from entering our waterways.

## **Bilge Oil**

Ninety percent of oil in marine waters is from small, chronic sources such as bilges, outboard motors, poor fueling procedures, urban run-off and improper disposal of used oil products. You can help protect Colorado's waterways by preventing oily bilge water from being pumped overboard.

- ▶ Keep engines well tuned; regularly check seals, gaskets, hoses, and connections for leaks and drips. Change oil filters often.
- ▶ Use drip pans with oil absorbent pads while draining oil from the bilges.
- ▶ Use an oil absorbent in the bilge to capture unexpected leaks. The absorbents will capture oil before the bilge pump discharges it into the water. Discard used oil absorbents at a household hazardous waste collection center. Also consider installing an oil/water separator.
- ▶ Clean and maintain bilges. Do not use detergents while cleaning.
- ▶ Don't mix used oil with other substances.



**When using oil absorbents in the bilge, secure them to prevent clogging or fouling the bilge pump float or sensor. Oil and fuel are flammable. Keep oil and fuel-saturated absorbents away from heat or sources of ignition and in well-ventilated areas.**

## Aquatic Nuisance Species

Non-native aquatic species—plants, fish and animals—are invading our state's waters. These pests can multiply dramatically under the right conditions, displacing native species, clogging waterways, and impacting navigation and recreation. Once introduced, they are nearly impossible to eliminate. Eurasian Watermilfoil, New Zealand mudsnail, and quagga and zebra mussels are some of the nuisance species that can be accidentally transported by recreational boaters when caught in propellers or intakes or attached to hulls.

### DON'T MOVE A MUSSEL!



**CLEAN:** all mud, plant and animal material from boats, trailers, boots, gear and equipment.

**DRAIN:** all water from bilges, live wells and ballast tanks.

**DRY:** all equipment completely before entering a new body of water.

Colorado is a mandatory boat inspection state meaning that ALL trailered and/or motorized watercraft are required to be professionally inspected by state certified personnel:

- ▶ Prior to launching in any water of the state after boating in a different state,
- ▶ Upon exiting any water in the state which is positive for an invasive species,
- ▶ Any time an inspection is requested prior to entering or exiting a water body in Colorado.

Boaters should take full advantage of Colorado's green seal and receipt program, which provides documentation of compliance and will reduce wait times to get through inspection station lines and get you on the water faster. All stations use green seals. However, waters that are positive for ANS use blue receipts, while waters that are negative use white receipts.

Every boater is required in regulation to Clean, Drain, and Dry his/her boat, trailer, and equipment every time they enter or exit any waters.

It is also required that boat operators remove all plants and pull all water drain plugs from the watercraft prior to leaving the lake or reservoir. It is not legal to transport a watercraft over land with plants on board and plugs in place.

You can help prevent the introduction and spread of non-native species from one (1) body of water to another by cleaning, draining and drying your boat and by taking these steps:

- ▶ Avoid chopping vegetation with your boat's propeller.
- ▶ Inspect your boat and remove aquatic plants or animals before you leave any body of water.
- ▶ Inspect all exposed surfaces. Small mussels feel like sandpaper to the touch.
- ▶ Wash the hull of each watercraft thoroughly.
- ▶ Drain all water and dry all areas.
- ▶ Drain and dry the lower outboard unit. Clean and dry all live-wells.
- ▶ Empty and dry any buckets.
- ▶ Dispose of all bait in the trash.

To help prevent further spread of aquatic weeds, it is important for boaters to clean all plant fragments from their watercraft and equipment.

For more information about Colorado Parks and Wildlife Aquatic Nuisance Species please visit: [cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/ISP-ANS.aspx](http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/ISP-ANS.aspx)

## **ANS Stamp**

Motorboats and sailboats must have an ANS Stamp prior to launching in Colorado waters.

Boat owners are required to purchase the ANS Stamp and operators must retain proof of purchase (electronic or printed receipt) on his or her person, the motorboat or sailboat, when operating the vessel.

## **Motorboats and Sailboats from Colorado**

**\$25.00** - Colorado residents will purchase the ANS stamp at the time of registration. If you register/renew your vessel online or via a registration renewal postcard, the cost of the ANS stamp appears as part of your total amount due. You do NOT need to manually add another twenty-five dollars (\$25) to your payment for the ANS stamp.

Residents with motorboats or sailboats documented by the U.S. Coast Guard or otherwise exempt from in-state registration can purchase the ANS stamp online at [cpwshop.com](http://cpwshop.com), or at any CPW office or sales location.

## **Motorboats and Sailboats from Another State**

**\$50.00** - Non-residents can purchase their ANS stamp online at [cpwshop.com](http://cpwshop.com), or at any CPW office or sales location.

**THANK  
YOU!**

**Funding contributes to prevention and management of ANS in the state. Thank you for protecting our waters and contributing to conservation in Colorado!**

# Helpful Definitions

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**“Peace Officer”** means a sheriff, undersheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer, Colorado State Patrol officer, or marshal, a district attorney, assistant district attorney, deputy district attorney, or special deputy district attorney, an authorized investigator of a district attorney, an agent of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, a district wildlife manager or special district wildlife manager, or a parks and recreation officer or special parks and recreation officer.

**“Personal Watercraft”** means a motorboat that uses an inboard motor powering a water jet pump as its primary source of motive power and is designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling on the vessel, rather than the conventional manner of sitting or standing inside the vessel. “Personal watercraft” includes a motorboat known as a “specialty prop-craft”, which is similar in appearance to a personal watercraft but powered by an outboard or motor driven propeller.

**“Masthead light”** means a white light placed over the fore and aft centerline of the vessel showing an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 225 degrees and so fixed as to show the light from right ahead to 22.5 degrees abaft the beam on either side of the vessel, except that on a vessel of less than 12 meters in length the masthead light shall be placed as nearly as practicable to the fore and aft centerline of the vessel.

**“Motorboat”** means any vessel propelled by machinery, whether or not such machinery is the principal source of propulsion including “personal watercraft”.

**“Operate”** means to navigate or otherwise use a vessel.

**“Owner”** means a person who claims lawful possession of a vessel by virtue of legal title or an equitable interest which entitles him to such possession.

**“Restricted visibility”** means any condition in which visibility is restricted by fog, mist, falling snow, heavy rainstorms, sandstorms, or any other similar causes.

**“Safe Speed”** the following factors shall be among those taken into account by all vessels:

- (1) The state of visibility;
- (2) The traffic density including concentration of fishing vessels or any other vessels;
- (3) The maneuverability of the vessel with special reference to stopping distance and turning ability in the prevailing conditions;
- (4) At night the presence of background light such as from shores lights or from back scatter of its own lights;
- (5) The state of wind, sea, and current, and the proximity of navigational hazards;
- (6) The draft in relation to the available depth of water.

**“Sailboard”** means a sail propelled vessel with no freeboard and equipped with a swivel mounted mast, not secured to a hull by guys or stays.

**“Sailboat”** means any vessel propelled by the effect of wind on a sail, including sailboards. Any vessel propelled by both sail and machinery of any sort shall be deemed a motorboat, when being so propelled.

**“Sidelights”** means a green light on the starboard side and a red light on the port side each showing an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 112.5 degrees and so fixed as to show the light from right ahead to 22.5 degrees abaft the beam on its respective side. On a vessel less than 20 meters (65’ 8”) in length the side lights may be combined in one lantern carried on the fore and aft centerline of the vessel, except that on a vessel of less than 12 meters (39’ 5”) in length the sidelights when combined in one lantern shall be placed as nearly as practicable to the fore and aft centerline of the vessel.

**“Single-Chambered Air-Inflated Device”** means an air-inflated device that has only one air compartment, such as inner tubes and certain types of air mattresses and small inflatable rafts.

**“Sternlight”** means a white light placed as nearly as practicable at the stern showing an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 135 degrees and so fixed as to show the light 67.5 degrees from right aft on each side of the vessel.

**“Underway”** means that a vessel is not at anchor, or made fast to the shore, or aground.

**“Vessel”** means every description of watercraft used or capable of being used as a means of transportation of persons and property on the water, including all types of stand-up paddleboards. Does not include any single-chambered, air-inflated devices that are not paddleboards; or Seaplanes.

**“Vessel not under command”** means a vessel which through some exceptional circumstance is unable to maneuver as required by these regulations and is therefore unable to keep out of the way of another vessel.


**“Vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver”** means a vessel which from the nature of its work is restricted in its ability to maneuver as required by these regulations and is therefore unable to keep out of the way of another vessel; vessels restricted in their ability to maneuver include, but are not limited to:

- (1) A vessel engaged in laying, servicing, or picking up a navigation mark;
- (2) A vessel engaged in underwater operations;
- (3) A vessel engaged in a towing operation such as severely restricts the towing vessel and its tow in their ability to deviate from their course.

**“Vessel staging area”** means any parking lot, boat ramp, or other location that any vessel is transported to or from by a motor vehicle and where such vessel is placed into operation on or in the water.

“Vessel staging area” does not include any location to which a vessel is transported primarily for the purpose of service, maintenance, repair or sale.

**“Wake”** means a movement of the water created by a boat underway, great enough to disturb a boat.



# Oh, SHELL NO

Colorado's  
drinking  
water could  
be impacted  
by Aquatic  
Nuisance  
Species  
(ANS)



**TAKE ACTION**  
**Be a Pain in the ANS**



[cpw.info/  
PainIntheANS](https://cpw.info/PainIntheANS)

Botón de traducción  
disponible en el sitio web.

CPW (IE/BC\_EK/IND)  
04/25/2025







# CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING



## What you can't see can harm you

Carbon monoxide is a potentially deadly gas produced any time a carbon-based fuel, such as gasoline, propane, charcoal or oil, burns.



[doubleangel.org](http://doubleangel.org)

- ▶ **Sources on your boat include gasoline engines, generators, cooking ranges and space and water heaters.** Cold or poorly tuned engines produce more carbon monoxide than warm, properly tuned engines.
- ▶ **Carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless and tasteless** and mixes evenly with the air. It enters your bloodstream through the lungs and displaces the oxygen your body needs.
- ▶ **Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning — headache, nausea, weakness, and dizziness — are often confused with sea-sickness or intoxication.** Prolonged exposure to low concentrations or very short exposure to high concentrations can lead to death.
- ▶ Each year, boaters are injured or killed by carbon monoxide. The Illustrations below show how carbon monoxide could be accumulating.



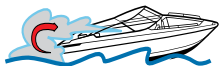
**Blocked exhaust outlets**



**Exhaust from another vessel**



**Slow speeds or idling**



**"Station wagon effect"**

**All carbon monoxide poisonings are preventable!**

For more information contact the U.S. Coast Guard at [uscgboating.org](http://uscgboating.org)



Colorado



## Boating Safety Unit

13787 US Highway 85 N, Littleton, CO 80125

(303) 291-7575

[cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety](http://cpw.state.co.us/activities/safety)

### VIOLATION-PENALTY

Any person who violates any provisions of these statutes and regulations shall be subject to the penalties set forth in Title 33, Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended.

In accordance with Federal law and policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.