

Boating Safety Tips from the Joint Rock Lake Committee

With the ice off the lake and with fun on the water beginning The Town of Lake Mills and the Joint Rock Lake Committee would like to remind you of some boating safety tips to make your boating experience a safe one.

Operator inexperience, inattention, recklessness, and speeding are the four leading causes of tragic watercraft crashes.

The leading cause of death is drowning.

Boaters who wear life jacket and take boater safety course are most likely to stay safe on the water.

Safety Equipment:

- * Never use drugs or alcohol before or during boat operation
- * Have a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket for each person onboard
- * Have one approved throwable device for any boat 16 feet or longer
- * Have a fire extinguisher
- * Have operable boat lights - always test before leaving the dock
- * Carry emergency supplies - cell phone, flares, and a first aid kit

Paddle Board Safety Tips:

- * Wear a life jacket
- * Carry a whistle
- * Be a competent swimmer
- * Know how to self-rescue
- * Know how to tow another board
- * Know the local regulation and navigation rules
- * Understand effects of winds
- * Know when to wear a leash
- * Be defensive - don't go where you shouldn't and avoid other boaters
- * Take a safety course

Be weather wise:

- * Keep a close eye on the weather and bring a radio
- * Sudden wind shifts, lightning flashes and choppy water means a storm is brewing
- * If bad weather is approaching, get off the water

Before getting underway:

- * Tell someone where you are going and when you will return
- * If you smell fumes, don't start the engine
- * Check Rock Lake boating regulations
- * Don't overload your boat. Abide by the boats capacity plate

Other WI boating safety tips:

- * Follow navigation and other rules on the water
- * Never allow passengers to ride on gunwales, seat backs or front of pontoons
- * After leaving launch, maintain slow-no-wake speed
- * Follow boat traffic rules

Common violations on Rock Lake that may result fines:

- * Operating a boat without valid certificate of number (registration)
- * Operating a boat between sunset and sunrise without appropriate lighting
- * Failing to carry required number/type of PFDs
- * Failing to carry a throwable preserver required for boats 16 feet and above
- * Operating a boat within a 100 feet of shore, piers, or rafts above slow-no-wake
- * Operating a motor boat without boat safety certification
- * Riding on decks and gunwales while under power
- * Operating a PWC within 100 feet of another boat above slow-no-wake
- * Failing to carry a fire extinguisher as required
- * Skiing, wake boarding or tubing outside of the hours of 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- * Operating above slow-no-wake in designated areas

Slow-No-Wake defined:

Slow-No-Wake means a speed at which a motorboat moves as slowly as possible while still maintaining steerage control. This is often misunderstood. It is a speed much lower than many operator think. It is a slower speed than many operators think and violations are common near shores, piers and designated areas that are marked by Slow-No-Wake buoys.

Please follow these basic safety tips and regulations. Please enjoy Rock Lake with family and friends this boating season.