

“THE RULES” – *Dogs, Docks, Beaches, Floats & Boats* –

We talked to Joe Marion, Mason County Animal Control, Barry Peterman, Mi. DNRE, and Adam Lamb, Mason County Sheriff’s Dept. Water Safety Officer. Here is what we learned:

DOGS: All dogs must be licensed, with their tags on the collar. There are no Mason County, or Amber Twp. Laws, regarding dogs running free. However, **the Michigan state wide leash law requires any dog off the owner’s property to be on a leash.** So, if you want to determine if a dog is licensed, or if you can’t resolve a problem with the owner, or don’t know the owner, you should call Mason County Animal Control at 231-843-8644.

DOCKS, SEAWALLS and SAND:

Per part 301 of Act 451 of 1994:

“Construction of any type of shore stabilization structure such as a sea wall, bulkhead, revetment, etc. at or below the ordinary high water mark of a lake or stream requires a permit.

Permanent Docks or Permanent Boat Hoists: Permanent docks or boat hoists which are left in year around require a permit. Seasonal docks and hoists do not require a permit if they are for private, non-commercial use by a landowner, do not unreasonably interfere with the use of the water by others, do not interfere with water flow and will not be placed in wetlands.

Beach Sanding: Placement of sand, pea stone, or other clean fill below (waterward) of the water line requires a permit. A reasonable amount of sand may be placed landward of the water line without a permit as long as the sand does not shift the location of the existing ordinary high water mark or the shoreline contour. The sand cannot be placed in a wetland.”

Questions regarding this subject can be addressed by calling: Barry Peterman, MDNRE, at 231-876-4442

FLOATS, PLAYSAPES, BUOYS, SWIM PLATFORMS:

There are no laws which specify distances from shore for these types of structures. However, their placement should be similar to others in the area, not interfere with navigation, and present no safety hazards. Reflectors are highly recommended.

BOATING/JET SKI SAFETY:

A detailed description of the laws can be viewed at www.masoncounty.net. Select the Sheriff Department, Special Units, Marine Division.

Remember, state law requires:

- Must maintain a distance of 100 feet from rafts, docks, and swimming areas, unless travelling at no-wake speed.
- Whenever possible, boats and personal watercraft should travel in a counter-clockwise direction (i.e. keep the shoreline to your right).
- Personal watercraft should not cross within 150 feet behind another vessel.
 - High speed boating is when the boat reaches a "planing" condition. Make sure you are in open water to avoid collision. For fast boats, inland lakes have a 55 mph speed limit.
 - "Slow no wake" is a speed of a vessel which makes a wake or wash that is minimal. Go no faster than this when within 100 feet of any dock, raft, anchored vessel, bathing beaches, or buoys.

Intoxicated vessel operators go to jail!

PWC's:

- PFD's must be worn.
- The kill switch must be connected to the operator.
- Do not follow less than 11.5 feet behind another boat.
- An operator must be 16 years of age or older or have a boating safety certificate if between the ages of 12 and 16 years of age.
- A personal watercraft (PCW) cannot be operated between sunset and sunrise. Our no high speed boating hours, 7:30pm to 11:00am, also apply.

The Sheriff's Water Safety Patrol does not have a policy of giving only a warning to violators. It is the discretion of the officer, and the nature of the conduct, which determines how each situation will be handled.

NOTE: Anyone placing any kind of structure in the lake could potentially be held liable in the case of an accident involving the structure. It is a good idea to place reflectors on any structure placed in the lake.

CALL 911: If you observe someone operating unsafely, or in violation of the No High Speed Boating rule, you should call 911. An officer will respond if possible. Other reports of a non emergency nature can be made by calling the Sheriff's Department at 843-3475. You can ask to speak with Adam Lamb, water safety patrol.

The Association committee for Lake Use & Water Safety Is Rick Ruba, 231-845-2949, rick.ruba@lpl.com, and Ed Sanders, 231-843-9005, esanders@mccschools.com .

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