



# THE BOAT

## Pleasure craft and pleasure craft activities

Regulations apply to all operators of pleasure craft, including:

- Powerboaters
- Personal watercraft (PWC) operators
- Canoeists, kayakers and participants in any other paddling sport
- Sailors and sailboarders
- Those towing waterskiers, wakeboarders and parasailors
- Airboaters
- Those racing in an on-water regatta or competition
- Air cushion vehicles and hovercraft operators
- Wing in ground effect\* vessel operators
- Anglers and hunters

\* Wing In Ground technology describes a vessel that looks like an airplane but can fly only very close to the water, as it rides on the air cushion build-up between the water and the under part of its wings.

## Personal watercraft operators

As high performance vessels, personal watercraft (PWC) require skill and experience to be operated safely. Operators of PWC must be at least 16 years of age and have proof of competency and proof of age on board.

Before you lend your PWC, you must ensure the operator is fully aware of the special characteristics involved with safe operation. Follow these basic tips:

- Always wear a Canadian-approved flotation device (inflatable PFDs are not permitted). One that is red, orange or yellow will improve your visibility to other operators.
- Wear thermal protection when operating in cold water (water less than 15°C).
- Read the owner's manual before setting out.

- Attach the engine shut-off line securely to your wrist or flotation device.
- Respect speed limits and other boating restrictions.
- Be cautious, courteous and respect your neighbours. Many communities consider PWC noise annoying when the craft is operated persistently at high speed in one place, especially when the craft jumps waves.
- Be aware of the impact your PWC can have on the environment. Avoid high-speed operation near shorelines.
- Navigate with care. At high speeds it is very difficult to see swimmers, waterskiers, divers and other PWC in time to avoid them.
- Do not operate after dark or in reduced visibility.
- Make sure your PWC is properly licensed and marked.
- If you recognize gasoline or vapours in the engine compartment, do not start your PWC and have it looked at by a qualified technician.
- Always replace the engine cover or seat before starting.



### Kayakers

Make sure you are seen on the water. Even in bright, calm conditions a kayak can be nearly invisible. It is especially difficult for power-driven vessel and large vessel operators riding high in the water to see kayakers. Choose bright colours such as red, yellow or orange for your flotation device and kayak. Also, remember to keep signalling devices within hand's reach in case of emergency.

Sea kayakers should be aware of their environment (water temperatures, tides, currents, wind and maritime traffic). For a copy of the Sea Kayaking Safety Guide visit [www.boatingsafety.gc.ca](http://www.boatingsafety.gc.ca).



### Anglers and hunters

Planning a trip across the lake to do some fishing or hunting? There is much more in getting from point A to point B than steering your boat.

- Know what safety equipment to carry. Depending on the vessel and its characteristics, you may need specific equipment.
- The more informed you are about things like weather patterns (see page 15), hypothermia and cold water shock (see page 21), the more prepared you can be. One false step and you could end up in the water. Your chance of survival could depend on your preparedness.
- Consider clothing. Some gear, such as hip waders, should never be worn in boats.
- If your trip unexpectedly becomes an overnight

excursion, have a way to contact your loved ones to let them know your plans. This is especially important if you have filed a sail plan (see page 15) and are expected home at a certain time.

- Don't cruise with booze.

## Construction Standards for Small Vessels

Small vessels (whether pleasure or non-pleasure craft) that operate in Canada must be built according to the Construction Standards for Small Vessels. Pleasure craft built to these standards are issued Canadian compliance labels. If you are selling, building or importing a pleasure craft, you must ensure it meets the appropriate requirements.

## Canadian compliance labels

Labels or plates issued in another country, or by any body other than the Government of Canada, are not valid in Canada.

Serially produced pleasure craft sold and operated in Canada up to 6 m (19'8") in length and capable of being fitted with an engine(s) of 10 hp (7.5 kW) or more must carry a capacity plate or capacity label. Pleasure craft not serially produced require a Single Vessel Plate (or label). Although requirements for capacity labels changed from 5 to 6 m (16'5" to 19'8") on April 1, 1999, plates issued before that date are still valid.

A capacity label states:

- The recommended maximum safe limit of an outboard engine power
- The recommended maximum safe limit of number of occupants the pleasure craft may carry
- The recommended maximum load capacity for the pleasure craft

A capacity label also confirms the vessel was built according to the Construction Standards for Small Vessels.

Remember, these are maximum recommendations for fair weather operation. The number of people who can be carried safely depends on the type of pleasure craft, distribution of occupants, equipment carried and weather and water conditions. Operators must know and respect the limitations of their boat.

**Your boat's seaworthiness can depend on the load you put in it and where you put it. Too much weight can overload your boat and cause it to become unstable or allow small waves to come aboard. It will also reduce the amount your boat can roll before its sides dip under. Weight that is carried too high will reduce stability, making your boat more apt to roll and less inclined to return to an upright position.**

Other pleasure craft fitted or capable of being fitted with an engine sold and operated in Canada must display a conformity label, stating the pleasure craft meets the requirements of the Construction Standards for Small Vessels, issued by Transport Canada.

A single vessel label is issued only to homebuilt pleasure craft or those pleasure craft built by a builder who is not longer able to provide a label.

A Canadian compliance label (capacity or conformity) on your boat confirms it met the appropriate construction standards for small vessels when it was built. If the pleasure craft does not have a Canadian compliance label, contact a Transport Canada Centre for information on how to obtain a label and the associated fees.

