

# Boating Safety

While boating on Runyan Lake you are required to comply with the laws of the state of Michigan and adhere to the RLI Bylaws.

Check these additional resources for more marine safety and legal information:

[Livingston County Sheriff - Boating Safety Page](#)

[MI DNR - Boating Handbook](#)

[US Coast Guard - Boating & Safety](#)

## Extracts from The Handbook of Michigan Boating Laws & Responsibilities

### WHO MAY OPERATE A BOAT ?

#### Those less than 12 years of age:

- May operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than 6 horsepower (hp) legally without restrictions.
- May operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 6 hp but no more than 35 hp legally **only if** they are directly supervised on board by a person at least 16 years of age.
- May not operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 35 hp legally under any conditions.

#### Those 12 to 15 years of age:

- May operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than 6 hp legally without restrictions.
- May operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 6 hp legally **only if** they:
  - Have passed a boating safety course approved by the Department of Natural Resources and have on board their boating safety certificate **or ...**
  - Are accompanied on board by a person at least 16 years of age.

**Those 16 years of age or older** may operate any boat on the waters of Michigan. Note: See "Who May Operate a Personal Watercraft (PWC)" below.

### WHO MAY OPERATE A PERSONAL WATERCRAFT (PWC / Jet Ski)

#### Those less than 12 years of age:

- No one under the age of 12 years may operate a PWC legally.

**Those 12 and 13 years of age** may operate a PWC legally **only if**:

- He or she obtained a boating safety certificate prior to January 1, 1999, **or ...**

### REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIC TO PWC'S

- Each person riding on or being towed behind a PWC must **wear** a U.S. Coast Guard—approved Type I, II, or III PFD. Inflatable PFDs may not be used.
- You may not allow a child under 7 years of age to ride on or be towed behind a PWC unless with a parent or guardian or designee of the parent or guardian.
- The lanyard of a PWC's ignition safety switch must be attached to the person, clothing, or PFD of the operator.
- It is illegal to operate a PWC between one hour before sunset and 8:00 a.m.
- PWCs must be operated in a reasonable and prudent manner at all times. It is illegal to:
  - Jump the wake of another vessel unnecessarily close to the other vessel.
  - Weave your PWC through congested traffic.
  - Swerve at the last possible moment to avoid collision.
- PWC's may only be used for towing with an observer on the vessel facing rearward observing the person being towed (i.e. the PWC must be a 2-seat PWC with ability for rear passenger to face rearward).
- A PWC must be operated at "slow, no wake speed" if crossing within 150 feet behind another vessel unless the other vessel is also a PWC.
- It is illegal to harass wildlife or disturb aquatic vegetation with your PWC.
- You may not operate a PWC in waters less than 2 feet deep unless you are operating at "slow, no wake speed" or are docking or launching your PWC.

### OTHER SAFETY & LEGAL REMINDERS

#### Run counter-clockwise

Runyan Lake is small, so most boats run the shoreline when cruising and towing – it is only legal to run the shoreline "counter clockwise", I.E. the shoreline must be to the right side (starboard side) of your boat at all times. If you turn to pick up someone who has fallen, look for other traffic and objects before you turn!

#### Sit properly

When a boat is in motion the driver and all passengers must be seated in proper seats. It is illegal to stand up, sit on the seat backs, sit on the gunwale, or sit on the front deck of a pontoon boat outside the rails.

#### Right of way

Powered boats must give way to any sail boat or sailboard/windsurfer. All boats must give way to any other boat approaching from the right. All boats must give way to persons or objects in the water.

#### An observer is required

Any boat towing a skier, wakeboarder, wakeskater, tuber or person on a similar floating device **MUST** have a passenger in the towing boat who is observing the person(s) being towed at all times. PWC's may only be used for towing with an observer on the vessel facing rearward observing the person being towed (i.e. must be a 2-seat PWC with ability for rear passenger to face rearward).

#### Anchor safely

Runyan Lake is up to 60 FT deep, to be effective your anchor needs to be big enough for your boat, and your anchor line needs to be 3-5 times the depth you are anchoring in – in 50 FT of water you need 150-250 FT of anchor rope!

#### Boat registration

Per our bylaws, all boats on Runyan Lake are required to display current Runyan Lake boat registration, along with state required valid MI registration stickers. This is a private access lake, but the MI DNR and the Livingston County Sheriff have jurisdiction. Owners are responsible for tickets and fines imposed by the authorities if your boat does not have valid MI registration.

- **All** of the following conditions are satisfied:
  - The operator is accompanied solely by his or her parent or legal guardian **and ...**
  - Both the operator and the parent or legal guardian have obtained a boating safety certificate **and ...**
  - The PWC is equipped with a lanyard-type ignition safety switch and the parent or legal guardian has the lanyard attached to his or her person, clothing, or PFD **and ...**
  - The PWC is designed to carry at least two persons.

**Those 14 years of age or older:**

- A person born after December 31, 1978, may operate a PWC legally **only if** he or she has obtained a boating safety certificate.
- Those born on December 31, 1978, or earlier may operate a PWC legally without restrictions.

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RLI will also not allow use of the boat ramp if your MI registration is expired for liability reasons.

**Watch your wake!**

By law, you are responsible for your boat's wake and any damage it may cause to moored boats, docks, shorelines, etc. Watch you wake, and be safe!

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**Runyan Lake Inc.**

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