

ENFORCEMENT ON THE WATER

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), provincial and municipal police forces and other authorized local authorities enforce the laws that apply to boats.

They may inspect your boat and monitor your boating activities to make sure that requirements are being met.

This may include checking for safety equipment, your Pleasure Craft Operator Card and careless operation on the water.

Transport Canada's Office of Boating Safety helps boaters learn about boating laws with the help of tools like this guide.

However, it's important to remember that these laws only set minimum requirements.

Many boaters go above and beyond these laws to enhance the safety of their boat and guests, and Transport Canada encourages everyone to do the same.

Boating Laws and Regulations

Canada's Criminal Code applies to boating and makes activities like operating a boat while impaired, failing to stop at the scene of an accident and operating a boat that is not seaworthy crimes.

The Canada Shipping Act, 2001 is the law that, along with its regulations, governs pleasure craft.

It includes the requirements of some international agreements that govern the conduct of all vessels.

The most important regulations affecting pleasure craft under this law include the:

- Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations
- Collision Regulations
- Small Vessel Regulations
- Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations
- Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships and for Dangerous Chemicals.

These and other boating regulations are available at www.boatingsafety.gc.ca

Fines *

Here is a list of some boating offences along with the associated fines.

- *Not having enough approved lifejackets on board; \$200*
- *Not having the required proof of competency on board; \$250*
- *Not having the required Pleasure Craft Licence on board; \$200*
- *Careless operation; \$200*
- *Speeding; \$100*

- *Allowing someone under age to operate a boat; \$250*
- *Operating a boat if you are under age; \$100*
- *Operating a boat without a working muffler in good condition; \$100*
- *Towing someone without a spotter; \$100*

*Not including administrative charges

You should also know that some boating offences can result in fines to both the operator of the boat as well as to the person who allowed the operation of the boat.

An example of this would be allowing someone under the age of 16 to operate your PWC.

You can find a complete list of boating offences and fines under the Contraventions Regulations by visiting www.boatingsafety.gc.ca

Visitors to Canada

All boaters (both residents and visitors) on Canadian waters are expected to know and obey the rules that apply in Canada.

However, if you are a non-resident of Canada and are operating a boat in Canadian waters, the exceptions below apply to you.

Operator Competency

If you are a non-resident visiting Canada with your boat, you are not required to carry proof of competency on board as long as your boat is in Canada for less than 45 consecutive days.

If you do require proof of competency (because the above doesn't apply or you want to operate a boat licensed or registered in Canada) then you may use an operator card or similar proof of competency issued by your home state or country.

Either way, you must keep proof of residence on board with you at all times.

Safety Equipment Requirements

Foreign boats (those that are licensed or registered in a country other than Canada) need to comply with the equipment requirements of the country in which the boat is usually kept.

If you are a non-resident of Canada operating a boat that is licensed or registered in Canada, the boat must meet Canadian safety equipment requirements.

However, in either case, you may bring your own lifejacket to use as long as it fits and meets the requirements of your home country.

Safety is a shared responsibility of Canadian waterway users and the organizations that govern them.

Boaters must operate their boats safely.

This means you must learn and follow the rules that apply to your boat as well as to the waters where you will be boating.