

Mind Your Wake

Be aware, be responsible and be respectful on the water



Everyone needs to feel and be safe while enjoying our beautiful lake.

Boating is about having fun and being respectful of other lake users but also being aware of the effects of boat wakes.¹ **Our goal is to have sustainable lakes that we can all enjoy for generations to come!**



Some guidelines for respectful boating:

1. Own your wake. For example, damage can occur when large wakes hit another boat, a swimmer or the shoreline. **You are liable for damages.**^{2,3}

2. Watch your wake. Where there is a speed limit or slow-no-wake restriction on the lake, it is your responsibility to know and respect it. Responsible boaters should reduce speed within 30 meters (about 100 feet) from shore.

Large wakes can¹:

- Destroy wildlife habitat, especially loon nests
- Cause silty waters which can smother fish spawning areas
- Cause shoreline erosion, particularly because of the narrowness of our lakes



3. Some recommendations.

- Use wider sections of the lake: avoid any narrow areas
- Avoid wakesports in the same area as another wake boat to avoid overlapping of wakes
- Avoid repetitive passes in front of the same properties to prevent overlapping/enhanced wakes



4. Keep the tunes in check! Sound travels on water. Loud music or the “roar” of a continuously running boat engine can be very disturbing to others near the water.

These guidelines should not serve as a replacement for learning the rules and regulations. Learn more by taking a boating safety course.

Why Do I Need to Worry About MY Boat Wake?

Boat wakes and prop wash churn up sediments which release harmful bacteria and nutrients that feed invasive weeds and algae blooms.⁴

Fish, wildlife habitat, e.g., loon nests, docks, shorelines and shoreline structures can be damaged by boat wakes. Large wakes cause boats to severely rock or break away from a dock and can pull mooring hardware from the boat, dock or both.

Large wakes can capsize canoes, kayaks, stand-up paddlers, sailboats and swamp swimmers. You could be liable for these damages.

Be aware of others when engaging in wakesports, tubing and waterskiing. **Consider moving to another part of the lake. Avoid spending all the time in the same area creating waves/overlapping wakes.**



Tips to Reduce Your Wake

- Reduce speed to MINIMIZE WAKE.
- Stay 30 meters (about 100 feet) from the shoreline, docks and other boaters and travel the same distance from your dock to deeper water before accelerating to a higher speed

(see diagram below)

Regulations

The Small Vessel Regulations state that “no person shall operate a small vessel in a careless manner, without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration from other persons.”²

Operate At a Safe Speed!

Under the Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations (VORR), boaters are required to slow down when within 30 meters of the shore. Failure to comply within this regulation can result in a fine.³

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1. https://wigreenfire.org/2019/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/WakeBoatsLakeEcosystemHealth_WGF-May2024_Final.pdf
 2. and 3. Government of Canada Website(<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/sor-2010-91/>)
 4. Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Website (https://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/lakes/docs/Wake%20Boat%20Petition%20Submission_03092022.pdf)



Displacement Speed

The slowest speed for most boats and creates the least wake. Bow is down.



Transition Speed

As you increase power to plane, the bow rises and the stern lowers. Largest wake is created.



Planing Speed

When planing, the bow drops down. This speed creates less wake than transition but more than displacement.

When accelerating, be sure to pass through the transition phase smoothly and safely, getting the boat to plane without delay.

Source: FOCA. Boat Illustration: Vighnesh Anvekar