

ITS TIME TO GET READY FOR LAKE RECREATION SEASON

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

New boat owners need to have some basic knowledge of the lake AND their boat. The worst possible scenario is for a new boat owner and/or resident of High Rock Lake to launch their boat on a holiday weekend for the first time. It is NOT the best time to learn the lake AND your new vessel. The lake is especially busy and choppy with all the activity. And plan to be back at your dock before sunset. You need to get your bearings on the waterway in the daylight before you try to learn your way back in the dark. The lake does not have street poles, or navigational lights on the shoreline, but we do have several sand bars, crops of trees and floating and/or stuck trees in our lakebed.

Even if you have been boating for years elsewhere, you need to know local water recreation rules; each lake has its own set of rules. Check out www.ncwildlife.org under boating. There are downloadable guides and even maps of the lakes.

YOU ARE THE CAPTAIN

Every boat owner is responsible for their guests and a good habit to start, especially if you have new friends visiting, since you have a shiny new toy, is to ask who cannot swim... Even though you have enough life jackets for each guest, you may need to direct extra precaution to an individual who is not a strong swimmer or not comfortable around water. It a good habit to start right now. As the captain, you are responsible for your boat, its navigation and all guests on your vessel at all times.

LIGHT THE WAY

Are your three lights (red/left side/port, green/right side/starboard, and white) properly working? Do you have chem lights, and backup bulbs too. Other boaters NEED to see you, from all angles.

BOAT INCIDENTS – 800-662-7137

All accidents and injuries 'more than first aid' must be reported to wildlife dispatch, especially if there is damage of \$2,000 or more, i.e., boat, dock, or person. All incidents on the lake must be recorded, including death and disappearance.

All boat owners need to check out each life jacket before the season starts. Every boat needs to have a **personal floatation device [PFD] in serviceable condition, of appropriate size, and accessible for each person onboard. North Carolina requires anyone younger than 13 to wear an appropriate life vest when on a recreational vessel.** Anyone riding a personal watercraft or being towed by one must also wear a Coast Guard-approved life vest. Life jackets do save lives if worn properly. That means a good (snug not tight) fit for adults. Infants and children MUST always wear their life jackets while on the boat.

Officers continually, and proactively, enforce laws and rules regarding authorized no-wake zones, as well as the reckless and negligent operation of any motorboat or vessel on these waters.

Please follow these guidelines to "wake responsibly":

- Stay at least 200 feet away from the shoreline, docks, or other structures.
- Keep music at reasonable levels. Sound travels well over water. If it is loud enough to hear at 80 feet back, it is likely loud enough for homeowners and other to hear as well.
- Minimize repetitive passes on any one portion of the shoreline. Once you have run the same line for a while, move on to another area.

Wake and Wake Boats

- Wake boats are high-tech, specialized boats with ballasts that fill with water to adjust for the size of wake desired.
- Wake boats can produce significant wake (3 - 4 feet) at low speeds (10 mph). No wake zones mean no white water being expelled from your boat.
- Wake is one of many factors that can cause erosion.
- Erosion, dock/boat property damage and noise are the primary complaints associated with the use of wake boats.
- Because the ballasts of wake boats fill with water, transfer of aquatic nuisance species could be an issue.

SAFETY OF OUR WATERWAYS - Lake Patrols

Both Davidson and Rowan Counties Sheriff departments have lake patrols on High Rock Lake. They work in conjunction with NCWRC Law Enforcement. There are a few misconceptions that the sheriff's' departments cannot cross over the county line in the middle of the lake. They can and will if there is a person of interest. Additionally, NCWRC Law Enforcement works the entire lake and can retrieve person of interest from boats, private docks and even your home.

THE NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION (NCWRC) INITIATIVES FOR 2021 IS ALL ABOUT SAFETY

"Our collaborative campaign with N.C. State Police is "ON THE ROAD, ON THE WATER, DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE," shared O'Hare. Boating while impaired [BWI] is .08 blood alcohol level. There will be a focus on those persons that are boating and drinking, then load up their boat and think they can drive home. Driving under the influence is bad enough, but couple it with towing a 2,000 lb. boat on a trailer. Not a good combination!

Look out for the BAT bus - Breath Alcohol Testing unit

If a boater is under the influence and is taken into custody, then what happens? Did you know there is a field sobriety test, yes even on the lake? Do not worry, it is not walking the plank, but there is a method to test boating while impaired for persons that are under suspicion of drugs and/or alcohol. Individuals will be 'invited' into the BAT unit that will produce immediate results which is given to the designated Magistrate. Probable cause can bring you in.

We all have smart phones so there is no excuse to not know the CURRENT rules of lake boating. Some of the downloadable information contained on the website:

- [Purchase Licenses & Permits](#)
- [Boating Education Courses](#)
-  [Boater's Checklist](#)
- [Accident Report Request Form](#) (PDF)
- [Interactive Maps](#)

For more information, please go to www.ncwildlife.org

Enjoy the lake this summer and be safe.