



Silo's Marina *on Canyon Ferry Lake*

**81 Silos Road
Townsend, MT 59644
406-266-3100**

RULES AND REGULATIONS

These rules and regulations are for your protection and the protection of your boat. Please comply with these and all park rules and regulations. This facility is a partnership between the Bureau of Reclamation, Broadwater County and Silo's RV and Campground. The rules of the State of Montana supercede all others, but County and Local Rules will apply equally and will be enforced equally by Silo's Marina/ RV and Campground, Broadwater County Sheriff, and the State of Montana.



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SILOS MARINA IS A FEE BASED FACILITY.

Slips are available on a daily, weekly or monthly basis and must be arranged for in advance at the Silos Campground Store. Advance arrangements may be made by calling 266-3100 and must be secured by a credit card number. If 24 hours notice is not given for cancellations, one day's rent will be charged. Colbinations will be given to the leasee only and should not be given to others unless the leasee assumes responsibility for the behavior and conduct of their guests.

SECURITY: Silos Marina assumes no responsibility for theft, vandalism to any property on or in the dock area. Security measures have been installed to assist owners in securing and proptecting their property. Please call Broadwater County Sheriff's Office if you encounter suspicious activity or vandalism.

1. Dock lines and fenders must be adequate to prevent damage to the vessel, the docks or other vessels. Snubbers and springlines are required on all boats. The Marina Staff may determine that a vessel is inadequately moored and may replace or add lines or fenders to prevent damage. The Patron shall be responsible for the costs of labor and materials for such replacement or additions. Proper mooring keeps your and others boats safe in all weather conditions.
2. Patrons shall maintain general public liability insurance (protection and indemnity) insuring against claims of personal injury or death and broad form property damage providing coverage of not less than \$500,000.00. Adequate hazard insurance coverage is required on all boats.
3. **ABSOLUTELY NO DIVING IS ALLOWED FROM THE DOCKS.** The docks have steel and cable substructure below the surface of the water that presents a very real danger to anyone diving or jumping from the docks.
4. The speed limit inside the breakwater is 5 mph, no wake. Do not exceed this limit as it may cause damage to another boat for which you may be held liable.
5. Quiet hours will be in effect from 10:00 PM until 6:00 AM daily in the marina area as well as throughout the park. Please be considerate of others. After 6:00 PM the outer security gate will be locked and only slip patrons will be allowed entrance to the marina complex. Please do not let anyone you do not know enter the marina area. Report any suspicious persons to the Broadwater County Sheriff or call 911. Gate combinations will be given to each slip patron. Keep track of the combination but do not give it to anyone else.
6. Fishing from the docks is not allowed in any State Park. Consequently, no fishing is allowed from our docks, any boat tied to the docks or any area within ten feet of the docks or between any fingers.
7. Sailing into or away from your slip is discouraged. Any damage caused to boats or other property may be your responsibility.
8. No portable grills or hibachis may be used on the docks or on your boat at the docks.
9. NEVER leave children unattended. If they do not swim or swim very little, they must have a life jacket on while on the docks.
10. No boat is allowed in a slip without a signed contract or short term waiver. Violation of this provision may lead to lockdown of the boat and/or expulsion from the Marina.
11. All Boats in the Marina must be properly registered with the state. The Department of Fish Wildlife & Parks will ticket improperly registered boats. The Marina may lockdown boats improperly registered at the request of the DFWP or the BOR.
12. Only one boat or watercraft is allowed in each slip. No inflatable boats, rafts, jet skis, kayaks or other watercraft are allowed to tie up with a boat in a slip for storage purposes. Violators may be fined \$25.00 per occurrence and may be expelled from the Marina.
13. No flammables, corrosives, herbicides or pesticides may be stored in any dockbox.
14. All fenders and lines must be carefully tied to the steel structure of the dock or attached to the softer wood on the sides of the dock, not the hardwood decking. Any attachment, including dock wheels and cleats, to the new docks must be approved and completed by Silos Marina Staff. DRILLING, SCREWING, NAILING, GLUING or any PERMANENT FIXTURES are PROHIBITED on the new hardwood dock boards and steel. A \$50.00 deck replacement fee may be assessed for each prohibited action.

Rules For Operating A Boat In Montana

Operator Age Limit - Motorboats & Personal Watercraft

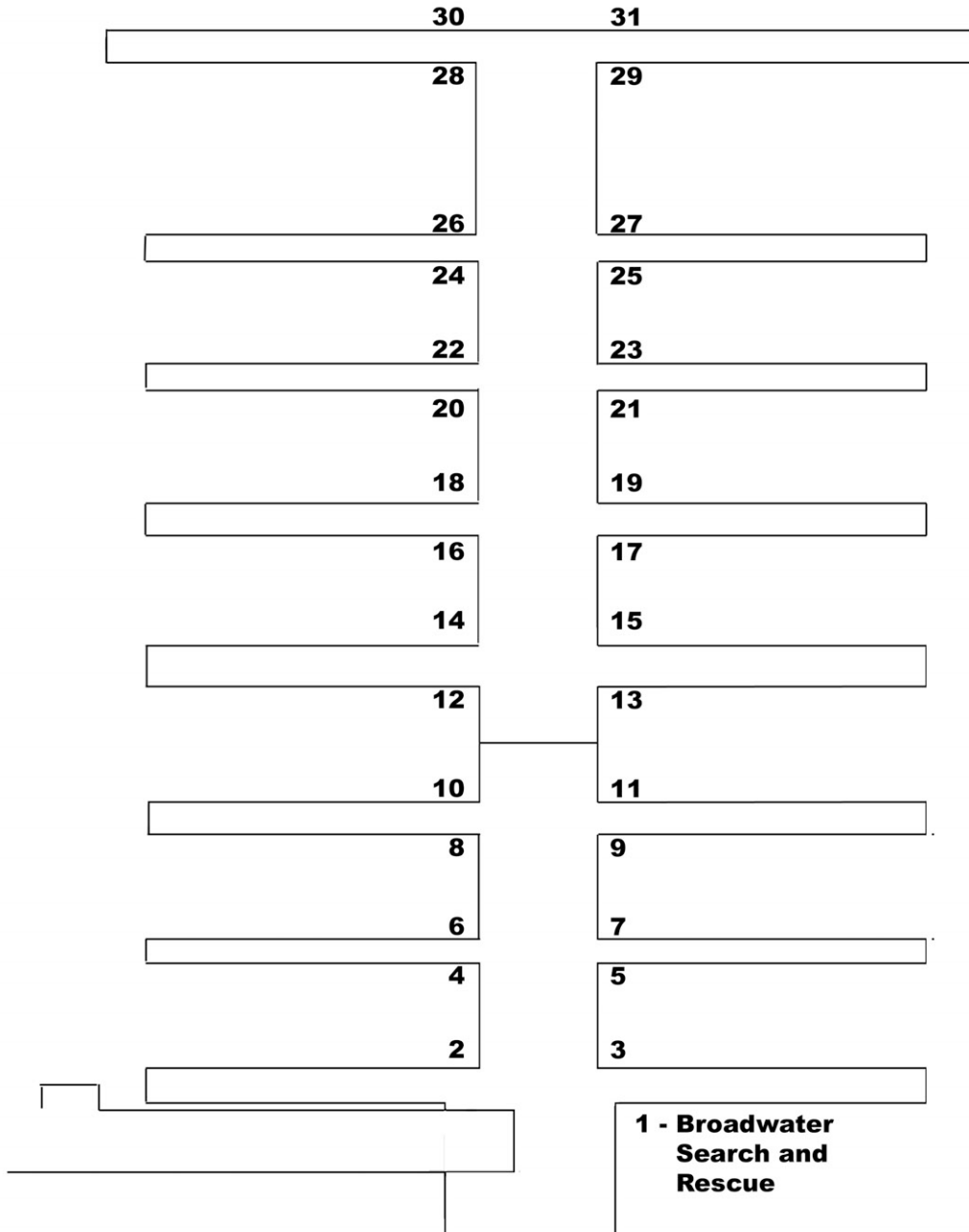
Children 12 years old or younger may not operate a motorboat or a personal watercraft powered by a motor rated at more than 10 horsepower unless accompanied by someone 18 years of age or older.

Youths 13 and 14 years of age may not operate those vessels without possessing a valid Montana motorboat operator's safety certificate or evidence of completing an approved boating safety course, or unless accompanied by someone 18 years of age or older.

Motorboat Certificates

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks offers a boat safety education program that includes a home-study course for motorboat and personal watercraft operators. Persons 13 years of age or older who successfully complete the course will receive a motorboat operator's certificate. To obtain a motorboat home-study course packet contact your regional Fish, Wildlife and Parks office or call the state headquarters at 406-444-2535.

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Prelaunch Checklist

Use this checklist as a guide to the materials and conditions you should have for a boating trip. Your needs will vary depending on the type of boat, the water you will be in, and the activities planned. Add to the list as needed.

- * Full fuel tank(s)
- * Bell or whistle or horn, as required
- * Working lights, as required
- * At least one working flashlight
- * Completed safety check for leaks; boat plug in
- * Fuel lines and tank checked for leaks
- * Suitable weather and water conditions
- * Properly stored and secured gear and supplies
- * A Coast Guard approved, wearable PFD properly sized and in good condition for each person on board. On boats 16 feet and over, an additional throwable device is required.
- * Approved, full-charge fire extinguisher(s) for motorboats
- * Paddles or oars
- * The boat's Certificate of Number LI Anchor and anchor line LI Tool kit and spare parts
- * Any needed charts, tide tables, current tables, navigation equipment
- * Boat shoes on all deck hands
- * Motor in good operating condition
- * Propeller in good condition with lower unit free of weeds and debris
- * Passengers seated and briefed on emergency procedures; their PFDs checked for fit
- * Your boating plans known by a responsible person ashore

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Rented Boats and Watercraft

A person must be 18 years or older to rent a motorboat or a personal watercraft powered by a motor rated at more than 10 horsepower. All required equipment, as described in this booklet, and a copy of the rental agreement must be on board rented vessels.

Water Skiing and Using Other Towed Devices

- * Water skiing and other towed recreation is not allowed between sunset and sunrise.
- * There must be at least two people in the towing boat: an operator and a person to observe the skier. If the operator is 12 or younger,

the observer must be at least 18.

- * Anyone towed by a boat must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD.
- * Water skiers must not approach within 50 feet of swimmers or enter a designated swimming area.

Personal Watercraft: Jet Skis, Water Bikes, Etc.

- * All operators and riders must wear U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD.
- * If the personal watercraft is equipped with a lanyard-type cord that shuts off the engine if the operator falls off the craft, the lanyard must be attached to the operator's wrist or PFD.
- * A "no wake" speed must be maintained when within 200 feet of a dock, swimmer, swimming raft, non-motorized boat or anchored vessel.
- * Stand-up personal watercraft and personal watercraft towing a waterskier must travel at the minimum speed necessary to operate when leaving from or returning to a dock or shore.
- * All rules regarding safe operation of a boat apply to personal watercraft as well.
- * For more regulations and tips read Personal Watercrafts- What you need to know!

Swimming Areas

Designated swimming areas are marked with white and orange buoys. It is unlawful to deface, disturb, remove or relocate any authorized buoys.

Alcohol and Drug Use

It is unlawful to operate or be in actual physical control of a motorboat, sailboat, water skis, surfboard, or similar device attached to a motorboat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. A person with an alcohol concentration of 0.08 or more is considered under the influence of alcohol.

Negligent Operation

Operating a vessel in a manner which may endanger the personal health or damage the property of any person is considered negligent operation. A boat's owner is liable for any injury or damage resulting from negligent operation.

Montana law prohibits:

- * operating a boat in a careless manner including such things as weaving through congested traffic, passing unreasonably or unnecessarily close to another vessel, and buzzing or wetting down others
 - * crossing or jumping the wake of another boat within 100 yards of the vessel or within 100 yards of a water skier being towed by the vessel (except when directly entering or leaving a marina or other watercraft docking/loading area)
 - * travel at a speed which does not permit bringing the boat to a stop within the assured clear distance ahead
 - * a reckless approach to, departure from, or passage by a dock, ramp, diving board or float
- Observe all "no wake" and speed-limit signs located on the water. Boat-ers are responsible for any damage caused by their wake. Check with a local game warden or the Fish, Wildlife and Parks office for additional speed and use restrictions that may apply.

Harassment of Wildlife

Powerboats, sailboats and boats under sail may not be used to kill,

capture, take, pursue, concentrate, drive or stir up any upland game birds, game or fur-bearing animals. Motor-driven vehicles may not be used to drive, molest, flush or harass any game animal or game bird while hunting.

Launching and Mooring

Boats must be launched from established launching areas if provided.

Boat owners should prepare their vessel for launching before parking at the boat ramp, should launch the vessel quickly, and move the tow vehicle so that others may use the area.

Boats may not be left unattended while moored or attached to a public boat dock. Docks are to be used only for loading and unloading unless otherwise posted.

Discharge of Waste

It is illegal to discharge any garbage, refuse, waste or sewage into or near the water. Boats equipped with toilets or porta-potties must dispose of waste properly. Because there are so few marine pumpout stations in Montana, boaters should check on the local availability of waste disposal stations before using their on-board facilities.

Loading Passengers and Gear

- * Do not load a boat with passengers or cargo beyond its safe carrying capacity, taking into consideration weather and operating conditions.
- * Distribute the weight of passengers and gear evenly.
- * Keep gear low and centered.
- * Do not stand or make quick, unbalanced movements in small boats.

Motor Size

It is illegal as well as unsafe to overpower a boat. The U.S. Coast Guard Capacity Plate on each boat provides the recommended horse power for that vessel.

Noise Limitations

Motorboats and personal watercraft may not emit noise in excess of 86 decibels measured at a distance of 50 feet. At idle speed, exhaust noise may not be in excess of 90 decibels measured one meter from the muffler.

More restrictive noise standards are in effect for Flathead Lake (Flathead and Lake Counties), Echo Lake (Flathead County) and Swan Lake (Lake County) because of population density and heavy recreational use. On these waterways, a person may not operate a motorboat or personal watercraft in proximity to the shore-line if the noise emitted is greater than 75 decibels measured at shoreline in accordance with the shoreline sound level measurement procedure.

Certain exceptions are made for state-sanctioned regattas or boat races and by special permit.

Races, Regattas and Other Marine Events

Written permission from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks is necessary to conduct a boating race, regatta or other marine event on Montana's waters. Letters of application must be sent at least 30 days prior to the scheduled event. Mail to: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Boating Law Enforcement, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701.

Restricted Areas - General

(See also: Closures and Use Restrictions)

- * Do not anchor in a position that obstructs a passageway ordinarily used by other vessels.
- * Do not operate your boat within 20 feet of the exterior boundary of a designated swimming area marked by white and orange buoys.
- * Do not operate a boat within 75 feet of a person engaged in fishing or hunting waterfowl unless it is unavoidable. If unavoidable travel at no wake speed or at the minimum speed necessary to maintain upstream progress.
- * Do not operate a motorboat within 200 feet of a tow-float or buoy displaying a red flag with a white slash indicating a "diver down" except by use of sailor oar. In an emergency or if there is insufficient water on either side to avoid passing through the 200-foot safety zone, do not exceed the "no wake" speed. (Note: the burden of proof of the necessity of passing through the safety zone is on the boat operator.) See Diver Down Flag Warning.
- * Do not operate or beach your motorboat within a designated swimming area.
- * Do not operate your motorboat within 50 feet of a swimmer in the water except for boats towing water skiers.

Local and Federal Regulations

In addition to state boating laws, local government and federal agency regulations may apply to boating activities in some areas. Contact the county sheriff's office or the federal agency for the area where you will be boating to find out if any additional regulations are in effect.

Diver Down Flag Warning

Boaters must stay at least 200 feet away from a "diver down" flag. If a boat must approach this warning flag, it must do so at a "no wake" speed.

The commonly used diver down warning flags are:

1. the blue and white International Code Flag "A" (alpha)
2. a red flag with a diagonal white stripe Diver's Flag

Accidents, Collisions and Casualties

Boating accident reports are required by law and provide valuable information for use in the prevention of future boating accidents. An accident must be reported immediately to the local sheriff's office or game warden if it caused:

- * the death or disappearance of any person
- * an injury requiring medical treatment beyond first-aid
- * property damage in excess of \$100

The operator of a boat involved in a collision, accident or other casualty must:

- * render practical assistance, without putting self or others in danger, to persons affected by the accident
- * give his or her name, address and identification of the boat in writing to any person injured and to the owner of any damaged property.

Boating accident report forms are available from the county sheriff's office, game wardens or any Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks office.

Enforcement

Authorized officers of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks have peace

officer status for enforcement of the boating regulations. Sheriffs, peace officers, and U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement officers also have authority to enforce these provisions. Fish, Wildlife and Parks wardens are authorized to stop, halt or inspect vessels in order to enforce the laws of this state.

Penalties

A person convicted of violating Montana's boating laws or regulations may be fined up to \$500 and sentenced for up to six months in jail.

Required Equipment

Montana and federal laws require that basic safety items be on board all boats.

Flotation Devices

- * Lifejackets: V.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) must fit the intended wearer, be readily accessible, and be in good condition.
- * Children under 12 years of age must wear a PFD on a boat less than 26 feet in length that is in motion.
- * There must be a wearable PFD (Type I, II, or III) for each person on vessels less than 16 feet long (including canoes and kayaks of any length). A throwable PFD (Type IV) may not be substituted for wearable PFDs.

Personal Flotation Devices (Life Jackets)

- * Vessels 16 feet and longer must have one Type I, II or III PFD for each person on board. In addition, one U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type IV throwable PFD must be on board and be immediately available for use.
- * A Type V PFD may be used in place of any PFD if specifically approved by the U.S. Coast Guard for the activity in which the wearer is engaged. The Type V PFD must be worn at all times to be acceptable as a life jacket.
- * Sailboard operators under 15 years of age must wear a PFD at all times. If two or more persons are occupying a sailboard, each person must wear a PFD.
- * Anyone towed by a boat must wear a PFD.
- * All persons operating or riding on a personal watercraft must wear a PFD.
- * Anglers using float tubes, belly boats, pontoon boats or kick boats, [click here to determine whether you need a PFD on board.](#)

Fire Extinguishers

All motorboats must carry on board a U.S. Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher as listed below:

- * Motorboats less than 26 feet long must have at least one B-1 fire extinguisher.
- * Exception: motor boats less than 26 feet long that are propelled by an outboard motor and are completely open construction (no closed spaces where gasoline fumes may be trapped) are not required to have a fire extinguisher.
- * Motorboats 26 feet to less than 40 feet long must have at least two B-1 or one B-II fire extinguishers.
- * Motorboats 40 feet to not more than 65 feet long must have at least three B-1 or one B-1 , and one B-II fire extinguishers.
- * When a fixed fire extinguishing system is installed and operational in the machinery space of a boat, one less B-1 fire extinguisher is required.

Backfire Flame Control (Flame Arresters)

Every inboard gasoline engine must be equipped with a backfire flame arrester that is securely attached to the carburetor and in proper working order.

Ventilation

All boats of closed construction (the engine or fuel compartments are not open to the atmosphere) and which use gasoline as fuel must be equipped with a ventilation system to remove explosive vapors from the bilges of engine and fuel tank compartments. The explosive vapors are heavier than air and accumulate in the bottom of the boat without proper venting, creating an extremely hazardous condition. Montana requires at least two ventilation intake ducts fitted with cowls or their equivalent to vent bilges and fuel tank compartments. At least one intake duct must be installed so that it extends to the point at least midway to the bilge, or at least below the level of the carburetor air intake. At least one exhaust duct must be installed so as to extend to the lower portion of the bilge. The duct should not be located so that a normal accumulation of bilge water would obstruct it.

Remember to adequately ventilate your boat before starting it by running your blower for at least 4 minutes - especially after fueling.

Whistles, Horns and Bells

- * Sirens may not be used or installed except on authorized emergency vessels.
- * A motorboat 16 to 26 feet long must carry some means of producing an efficient sound signal that is audible for one-half mile, such as a whistle or a horn.
- * A motorboat more than 26 feet long must have on board a bell and a whistle or horn capable of making a sound that is audible for one mile.

Maneuvering and warning signals:

- One Long Blast: warning signal (coming out of a slip)
 - One Short Blast: I will pass you on my port (left) side
 - Two Short Blasts: I will pass you on any starboard (right) side
 - Three Short Blasts: I am in reverse
 - Five or More Blasts: danger signal
-

Navigational Lights

Between sunset and sunrise and at other times of restricted visibility, vessels in operation must display navigational lights. All white lights required by the rules must be visible from a distance of at least two miles. All colored lights must be visible for a distance of at least one mile.

Navigation lights include:

- * a green light on the starboard (right) side of the boat
- * a red light on the port (left) side of the boat
- * a white light that is visible in all directions (usually located on the stern and higher than the red and green lights)

Manually propelled (non-motorized) boats may exhibit navigation lights or instead carry a white light which can be exhibited in time to prevent a collision.

Boats at anchor outside of a designated mooring area must display an all-around white anchor light between sunset and sunrise.

Rules Of The Road

Right of Way

These rules of the road are the traffic laws of Montana's waterways.

Like other traffic laws, they are legally binding on vessel operators.

The rules dictate who has the right of way when vessels meet in open water and in crowded anchorages.

- * Sailboats and manually powered vessels have the right of way over motorized boats in nearly all situations. Motorboats generally should stay clear of sailboats and manually powered vessels and not create a wake which may cause them trouble or to be swamped.
- * When overtaking another vessel, the boat being overtaken has the right of way and must hold course and speed. The passing boat is required to stay clear.
- * When meeting head on, keep to the right. Boats going downstream have the right of way over boats going upstream.
- * When two boats are meeting at right angles, the boat on the right (the privileged vessel) has the right of way. The give-way vessel on the left must slow down and permit the privileged vessel to pass.
- * Always operate a vessel at a safe speed so that you are able to stop within the assured visible distance ahead or take proper and effective action to avoid collision.
- * Refer to Rules for Operating a Boat in Montana.

Aids To Navigation

Individuals and non-profit organizations may identify hazards on state waterways by placing a sign or marker at the hazard. Only department approved signs, markers or buoys may be used to mark a hazard. A white plastic milk jug attached by a cord to the hazard may also be used. The sign or marker must:

- * Display the name and telephone number of the individual or non-profit organization that placed it.
- * Be maintained or removed by the individual or nonprofit organization when dictated by changing water conditions or seasonal changes.
- * Be placed only to signal a hazard in the waterway. They may not be used to mark swim areas, safe channels, speed limits or water skiing courses.
- * Be located on state waterways. They are not allowed on navigable waters with federal jurisdiction.

Registration, Numbering & Validation Decals

Boat Registration and Exemptions

Sailboats 12 feet long and longer and all motorboats and personal watercraft must be registered and numbered. Non-motorized sailboats less than 12 feet long and manually propelled boats, regardless of length, are exempt from registration and taxation.

Also exempt are a vessel's lifeboat, government- owned boats, and properly registered boats from out of state or country which will not be in Montana for more than 90 consecutive days.

Out-of-state boats used in Montana for more than 90 consecutive days must be registered at the county treasurer's office in the county where the boat will be principally used.

How to Register a Boat

In Montana, boat owners must obtain a certificate of ownership (title) and certificate of number (which lists the boat's registration, decal, hull and title numbers) and pay all fees to the County Treasurer in

the county where the owner resides. The certificate of number must be carried on board the boat and be available for inspection whenever the boat is in operation. The boat owner will receive one registration decal as proof of payment of fees in lieu of tax.

Fees

Certificate of Ownership (title) \$10

Certificate of Number (registration) \$15.50

Fee-In-Lieu of Tax - By vessel type and length

- * Motorboats at least 10 feet in length but less than 16 feet in length
- * Sailboats at least 12 feet in length but less than 16 feet in length
- * Personal watercraft less than 16 feet in length
- * Motorized pontoon less than 16 feet in length \$50
- * Motorboats at least 16 feet in length but less than 19 feet in length
- * Sailboats at least 16 feet in length but less than 19 feet in length
- * Personal watercraft 16 feet in length or longer
- * Motorized pontoon 16 feet in length or longer \$110
- * Motorboats 19 feet in length or longer
- * Sailboats 19 feet in length or longer \$280

Effective January 1, 2004, an additional .50 cent surcharge will be added to the total fee in lieu of tax collected. The .50 cent fee will fund Montana Search and Rescue operations, training and equipment.

Failure to pay the fee in lieu of tax is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine equal to four times the applicable fee.

Validation Decals

All motorboats, sailboats or personal watercraft that are numbered must display two validation decals by December 31, 2005. All validation decals expire on February 29, 2008. Validation decals are in effect for another 3-year period expiring February 28, 2011. Validation decals may be obtained, free of charge, at any Fish, Wildlife and Parks regional or area offices or the Fish, Wildlife and Parks website at Order Your Validation Decals.

Display of Number and Decals

The boat's registration number must:

- * be painted on or attached to each outboard side of the bow (forward half) of the vessel;
- * read from left to right;
- * be vertical block letters at least 3 inches in height;
- * be a color contrasting with the background color of the boat;
- * be as high above the water line as practical and still be visible;
- * be maintained in a legible condition;
- * contain a space or hyphen separating the "MT" from the number/letter suffix.

(Example: MT 123 ABC or MT - 123 - ABC)

- * No other numbers or letters may be displayed on the bow of the boat.
- * Boat owners receive one registration decal that must be securely attached to the left or port side of the vessel. The decal must be spaced three inches aft (rearward) and directly in line with the boat number displayed on the left side of the vessel.
- * Boat owners receive two validation decals. One decal must be attached immediately after (rearward) of the registration decal on the left (port) side and one immediately after the identifying number on the right (starboard) side of the boat.

Sale, Trade or Transfer of a Boat Which Must Be

Registered

When ownership of a boat changes, the previous owner must sign the back of the certificate of ownership before a county treasurer, deputy county treasurer or notary public. Within 40 days, the new owner must apply for a change of certificate of ownership (title) and registration and validation decals. If the boat is operated during the 40-day application period, a temporary registration permit issued by the county treasurer must be kept on board and shown upon request.

A boat owner also must contact the county treasurer within a reasonable amount of time when there is a change of address or upon the sale, destruction, abandonment or theft of the boat.

All boats sold or manufactured in Montana must comply with all applicable equipment requirements.

Measuring Boat Length

To determine the length of a boat, measure the distance down the centerline from the foremost part to the aftermost part of the boat.

Do not include bowsprits, rudders, outboard motors, brackets, or similar fittings in the measurement.

No Wake Zones on Lakes

Lakes Greater than 35 Acres

All watercraft operating on public lakes and reservoirs greater than 35 surface acres within the western fishing district are limited to no-wake speed from the shoreline to 200 feet from the shoreline. The exceptions include:

- * Personal watercraft which must maintain a minimum operating speed to remain upright and maneuver in the water may travel at that minimum operating speed following the most direct route through the no-wake zone to and from shore.
- * Motorized watercraft towing a skier from or to a dock or the shore, except that watercraft must travel the most direct route through the no-wake zone.
- * The following lakes located with the Thompson Chain of Lakes in Lincoln county:
 - * Crystal Lake
 - * Horseshoe Lake
 - * Loon lake
 - * Lower Thompson Lake
 - * McGregor Lake
 - * Middle Thompson Lake
 - * Upper lobe of Upper Thompson Lake

No Wake Speed is defined as a speed whereby there is no "white" water in the track or path of the vessel or in created waves immediate to the vessel.

Lakes 35 Acres or Less

All watercraft operating on public lakes and reservoirs in the western fishing district that are 35 acres or less of surface water are limited to no-wake speed. The following list of lakes has been determined 35 acres or less by means of the 1:100,000-scale hydrography layer within the department's geographic information system (GIS).

Safety Tips

Courtesy - Because many different types of recreators may be sharing a boating area, show respect by operating at safe speeds and keeping an adequate distance from others. Due to their limited maneuverability, give sailboats and other non-motorized craft a wide berth. Remember, you are responsible for any damage your boat, or the wake from your boat, may cause.

Weather - It's unpredictable in Montana, so watch carefully for changing conditions. Be prepared to protect your passengers and yourself in case of foul weather.

Tell somebody - Make sure a friend, relative or neighbor knows of your boating plans. Leave your destination, time of departure and expected time of return, because this information may save your life in the event of an accident.

Safety equipment -The items covered in this booklet cover only the bare essentials. Additional recommended equipment which could allow you an extra margin of safety might include an extra fire extinguisher, extra PFDs, a tool kit, spare parts, a bailing bucket, an anchor and line, a flashlight, a paddle, a radio, a towline, extra fuel and oil, and a first aid kit.

Cliff and bridge diving – Look before you jump and check the water for hidden rocks, trees, etc. Make sure the water is deep enough.

Always jump feet first; never dive head first.

Hypothermia – When a body loses heat faster than it can produce it, the body temperature goes below normal. That's hypothermia, and it can be deadly. Immersion in Montana's cold water (less than 70 F) will cause a body's core temperature to decrease. Symptoms can include shivering, poor coordination, and numb hands and feet. Learning how to treat hypothermia could save a life.

Dams – Currents above dams can suck boats into the water going through the dam. The currents and turbulent waters below can swamp boats and drown boaters. Even low head dams, which sometimes seem to have a very small drop, are dangerous, because the water going over the dam circulates back toward the face of the dam and can trap a person or boat.

Respecting Wildlife and Habitat

For your own enjoyment and for the well-being of the wildlife, please observe these viewing tips:

1. If you interrupt an animal's normal behavior, you are too close, too big or too active. Use binoculars or zoom lenses to watch close up. Make yourself as small and unobtrusive as possible, possibly using natural cover as camouflage.
2. Avoid disturbing waterfowl to make them fly.
3. Give nests and nesting areas a wide berth to help protect eggs or the young. When adult birds are forced from a nest, the eggs are exposed to predators and chilling. An absence of only an hour or so may result in the death of the young.
4. In northwest Montana, where loon nests are common, many nesting sites are protected by floating signs.