

Sharing the Waterways - Reducing Conflict Begins with You!

Apply the “Golden Rule” and Understand Boating Needs of Others for Safety:

- Wherever paddlers are, motorized boat operators need to pay special attention to their speed, wake and proximity impacts on others. Let the paddler know you see them by changing course, speed or using approved sound signaling (air horn or built-in horn). Paddlers acknowledge the motorboat operator in-kind.
- Paddlers are encouraged to stick together and venture out into deeper or wider waterways ONLY when skill level and safety allow.
- Like any road with a crosswalk, paddlers are encouraged to operate on the outer limits of a navigable channel and cross at 90-degree angles. Make sure to have enough time to paddle across the waterbody safely and not impede motorboat traffic flow.
- When a motorboat operates “on plane,” at a faster speed, the boat produces the smallest wake possible. On shallow waterways, depending on the type of motorboat, this is the safest and lowest impact mode of operation. Paddlers should keep their ears primed for the sound of a motorboat approaching and give way. Motorboat operators should be ready to steer clear or alter speed and signal to the other boaters that they are seen.

All boaters can do their part:

- It is every boater’s responsibility to learn and follow the navigation [“rules of the road.”](#)
- Be mindful and conscious of your activity’s impact on others. Practice continual “Situational Awareness.”
- Be a good neighbor and look out for one another. If you see another boater in need, stop and render aid if you are safely able to do so and stay on-scene until everyone is safe. Not only is this a courteous thing to do, it is also the law.
- Know your limits. Where there are a lot of people recreating, evaluate your skill level with the other activities and gauge whether to do your activity in that location. If you are new to boating, you may want to find a more remote, secluded location to hone your boating skills before venturing out into densely populated waterways. This applies to both motorized boaters and paddlers.
- “See something, say something.” If someone is operating recklessly, take note of the make, model and if possible, the boat’s OR number and file an [electronic report](#). The Marine Board can follow up with a notice to Marine Law Enforcement.
- If you are involved in a boating accident that involves an injury or property damage exceeding \$2,000, you must report the incident to the Marine Board. A [Boating Incident Report Form](#) must be submitted within 48 hours of an injury or death and within 10 days of an accident-causing property or equipment damage only.



Recreational boating is a privilege, and all boaters need to work together to maintain that privilege. Be safe, be courteous, and share the water.