

# MAINE BOATING LAWS & RULES

## Watercraft Registration & Operation

### Registration (annual)

- any watercraft propelled by a motor (including electric) must be registered
- sticker displayed on both sides at bow
- registration number in 3" block letters of maximum contrast to hull
- vessel registration number permanent in case of transfer of ownership in state
- paper registration carried aboard when operated
- legally registered out-of-state boats allowed up to 60 contiguous days

### Milfoil Sticker (annual)

- part of ME registration sticker
- out-of-state boats must purchase and display a separate sticker (\$20)

### Excise Tax (annual)

- ME residents pay town where they reside
- non-ME residents pay town where boat is located
- exceptions:
  - manually-propelled vessels less than 20' in length
  - out-of-state vessels in ME fewer than 75 days

### Forbidden Operators

- for motorboats of over 10 hp
  - persons under 12 unless supervised by person at least 16
- personal watercraft (jet skis)
  - any person under 16 years
  - persons 16 & 17 years unless supervised by person at least 18**or** carrying proof of age plus a boating safety education certificate

### Operating Under the Influence of Alcohol

Any person operating any watercraft while having 0.08% or more alcohol in blood guilty of a criminal violation

### Carrying Passengers for Hire

- In ME State waters, call 207-287-8000 for license information
- USCG Captain license required in Federal waters

### Towing Behind a Powered Watercraft

- must wear non-inflatable PFD when being towed
- only 1/2 hr before sunrise to 1/2 hr after sunset (sunrise to sunset for PWC)
- requires additional "tow spotter" over 11 years of age
- prohibited within 200' of shore except when picking up or dropping off

### Watercraft Accidents

- stop immediately and assist anyone injured or in danger
- trade operators' names, addresses, and watercraft identification numbers
- in case of injury or death, operators report accident to nearest law enforcement asap
- accidents must be reported on MDIFW form, available at [www.maine.gov/ifw](http://www.maine.gov/ifw)

# Required Equipment

## Personal Flotation Devices (Life Jackets)

- ALL watercraft must have a pdf for each person aboard
  - USCG approved
  - in good condition
  - readily accessible
  - of proper size:
    - infant (<30 lb), child (30-50 lb), youth (50-90 lb), adult (>90 lb)
- Must be worn whenever watercraft underway:
  - by children under 11 years
  - on personal watercraft (not inflatable PFD)
- Watercraft over 16' (except canoe or kayak) must have a throwable PFD

## Navigation Lights

- To be displayed between sunset and sunrise and in restricted visibility
- Powerdriven watercraft less than 40' in length whenever underway:
  - red (port) and green (starboard) at bow, visible 1 mile in clear night
  - all-round white light at stern, visible 2 miles in clear night
- Unpowered sailboats under 65' in length whenever underway:
  - red (port) and green (starboard) at bow, visible 1 mile in clear night
  - white stern light visible 2 miles in clear night
  - (option) combined red, green, and white at top of mast
- Unpowered sailboats under 25' in length whenever underway:
  - same as under 65' if possible
  - if not possible, a white lantern or flashlight
- Manually propelled watercraft underway, a white lantern or flashlight at hand
- All watercraft anchored or moored outside a designated anchorage or mooring area between sunset and sunrise must display an all-round white light

## Fire Extinguishers

- Required on any watercraft having one or more of the following:
  - inboard engine
  - permanently installed fuel tank
  - closed compartment containing portable fuel tank(s)
  - closed living space
- Watercraft under 26' must carry one B-1 rated extinguisher
- Watercraft 26' to 40' must carry two B-1 or one B-2 rated extinguisher

## Ventilation

- Inboard gasoline-powered watercraft require two ventilation ducts
- if fit with blower, operate blower 4 minutes before starting
  - if no blower, open engine compartment and sniff for fumes

## Sound Producing Devices

- All watercraft must carry a whistle or horn capable of 2-second duration

# Rules of the Road (Collision Regulations)

## LOOKOUT.

Every vessel must at all times maintain a proper lookout by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.

## RISK OF COLLISION.

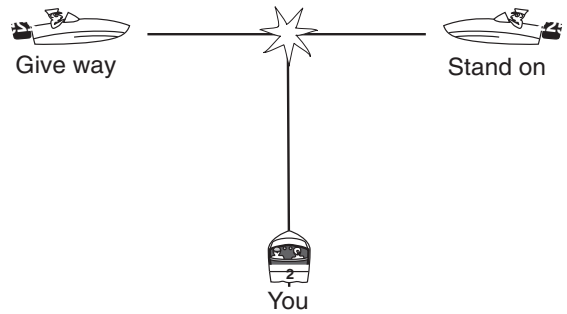
Every vessel must use all available means to determine if risk of collision exists. Risk exists if the compass heading of an approaching vessel does not appreciably change.

## SPEED IN RESTRICTED AREAS

Vessel speed must not exceed "headway speed" (minimum speed required to maintain control) within the "water safety zone" (within 200 feet of shore), within a marina, or within an approved anchorage.

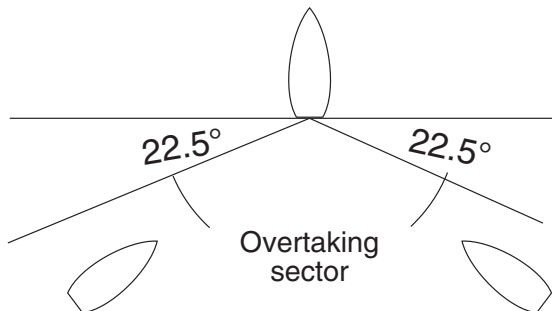
## POWER-DRIVEN WATERCRAFT CROSSING

If other vessel on your starboard, keep clear; pass aft  
If other vessel on your port, maintain course and speed



## OVERTAKING ANOTHER WATERCRAFT

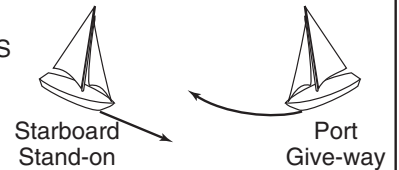
If overtaking, stay clear  
If being overtaken, stand on



## SAILBOATS MEETING

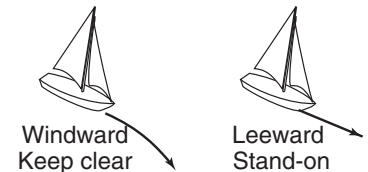
### DIFFERENT TACKS

Port tack vessel  
keep clear



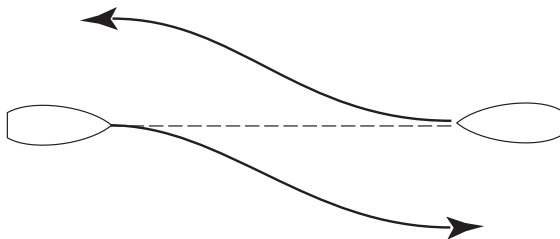
### SAME TACK

Windward vessel  
keep clear



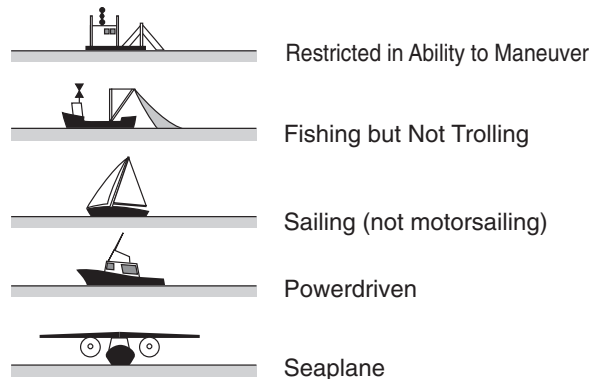
## POWER-DRIVEN WATERCRAFT HEAD-ON

Both alter course to starboard  
If in doubt, assume head-on



## DIFFERENT TYPE VESSELS

Stay clear of vessels higher than you



# Nickerson Lake Safe Zone

("Headway Speed" only within 200' of shore)

