

SUMMARY OF KANSAS BOATING LAWS

Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!
Prevent the transportation of
nuisance species.

Clean all recreational
equipment. Learn more at:
www.ProtectYourWaters.net



**STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!**

**Clean–Remove–Drain–Inspect to protect
Clean Boats, Clean Waters**



**Kansas Department of
Wildlife and Parks
www.kdwp.state.ks.us**

Revised 01/2004

CONTACTS

This pamphlet is a summary of Kansas Boating statutes and regulations. It answers some frequently asked questions about boating in Kansas. For further information about boating laws contact us at:

Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks Law Enforcement Division

512 SE 25th Avenue
Pratt, Kansas 67124-8174
(620) 672-5911



Region 1 Office
1426 Hwy 183 Alt
Hays, KS 67601
(785) 628-8614

Region 4 Office
6232 E. 29th St. N
Wichita, KS 67220
(316) 683-8069

Region 2 Office
3300 SW 29th
Topeka, KS 66614
(785) 273-6740

Region 5 Office
1500 W. 7th P.O. Box 777
Chanute, KS 66720
(620) 431-0380

Region 3 Office
1001 McArtor Road
Dodge City, KS 67801
(620) 227-8609

Website:
www.kdwp.state.ks.us

E-mail:
hatcaptain@wp.state.ks.us

Funding for this brochure was provided with the help of a U.S. Coast Guard Grant



TABLE OF CONTENTS

BOATING IN KANSAS	4
REGISTER YOUR BOAT	5
How do I register my boat?	5
Where do I attach the registration decals, numbers? ...	6
When does my registration expire?	7
Where do I look for the hull identification number? ..	7
EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS	8
Personal Flotation Devices (PFD)	8
Fire Extinguishers	9
Ventilation	11
Backfire Flame Control	11
Capacity Plates	11
Navigation Lights	12
Sound Producing Devices	12
Marine Toilets	14
Equipment Suggestions	14
OPERATION REQUIREMENTS	16
Alcohol and Drugs	16
Where is wakeless speed required?	16
What size outboard motor can I put on my boat? ...	16
What about water skiing?	17
Who can operate my boat?	17
How many people can I have on my boat?	17
What is negligent operation?	17
What are the driving rules on the water?	18
PERSONAL WATERCRAFT	19
SAFETY & COURTESY TIPS	20
ACCIDENT REPORTING	21
What should I do if there is an accident?	21
WATERWAY MARKER SYSTEM	22
What do the markers tell me?	22
BOATER EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS	24
ZEBRA MUSSELS	27

BOATING IN KANSAS

Kansas boating laws promote the full use and enjoyment of the state's waterways by boaters, provide for the registration of boats, and ensure the safety of persons and property connected with boating on state waters.

State boating laws are administered by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Law Enforcement Division.

The following information includes highlights of Kansas boating laws. In a pamphlet this size, it is impossible to list all of the applicable boating laws. It is a guideline and does not contain the complete content of each law. Detailed information on boating laws and regulations is available from KDWP offices listed in this brochure or on the department website at: www.kdwp.state.ks.us

Changes in boating laws may occur throughout the year. This brochure is only a summary. Boat owners and operators should contact Kansas Wildlife and Parks with questions not covered in this pamphlet.

Boat Class Category

Class A less than 16 feet in length.

Class I over 16 feet and less than 26 feet in length.

Class II over 26 feet and less than 40 feet in length.

Class III 40 feet and over in length.

REGISTER YOUR BOAT

All boats powered by gasoline, diesel, electric motors, or sail must be registered and numbered. Sailboards and personal watercraft are considered boats.

Nonresidents using boats that are properly registered in another state may use their boats for up to 60 consecutive days without registering them in Kansas. Both in-state and out-of-state boats must have their Certificate of Number on board at all times. Boats that are required to be registered must be properly registered before they are operated.

How do I register my boat?

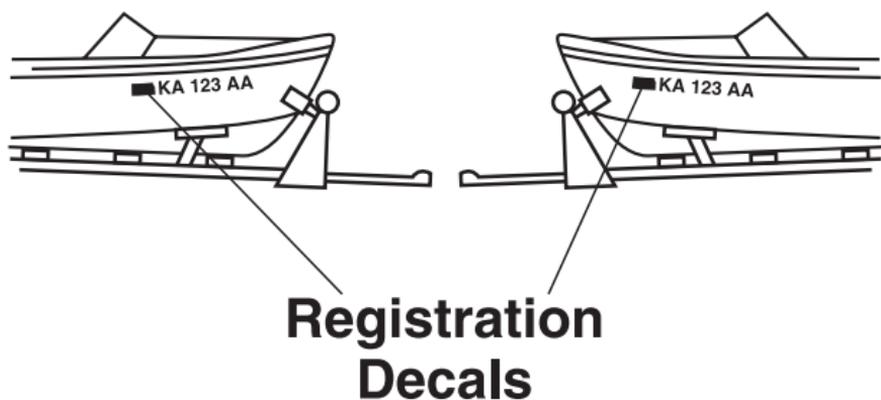
An application form can be obtained at the nearest marine dealer, county clerk's office, or KDWP office. Fill out the application completely and mail it along with the required fee.

When a vessel is sold, lost, stolen, destroyed, transferred, or abandoned the person whose name appears on the Certificate of Number shall notify the department within 15 days.

Where do I attach the registration decals and assigned numbers?

Your assigned number must be painted or permanently attached to each side of the forward top half of the boat. Numbers must be vertical block characters at least three inches tall that read from left to right. They must contrast with the background color and be distinctly visible and legible. Spaces or hyphens equal to letter width must separate letter groupings and numeral groupings.

Your assigned number consists of the prefix letters KA, one to four numerals and two suffix letters. For example: KA 123 AA or KA-123-AA.



A registration decal will be issued and must remain on your boat for the duration of the three-year registration period. Attach the decal as instructed on the back of the renewal decal.

Registration decals are displayed three inches in front of the assigned number on each side of the boat. Boats registered in Kansas must display only current registration decals. Sailboards shall have the decal attached to the front half of the top of the sailboard. Display of registration numbers is not required on sailboards.

When does my registration expire?

Kansas boat registrations expire three years from the date of registration. Renewal notices are mailed prior to the expiration. If you do not receive a renewal notice by mail, please contact the Boating Section at the Pratt Operations office. Renewal registrations can be completed over the Internet at: www.kdwp.state.ks.us.

Where do I look for the hull identification number?

The hull identification number (HIN) on all boats built after November 1, 1972 is permanently affixed to the rear of the transom, usually on the upper right corner. It is required by federal law and must appear on the registration application. The HIN consists of 12 letters and numerals at least one-quarter inch tall that indicate the manufacturer, hull serial numbers and/or letters, and model year and/or month.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Personal Flotation Devices (PFD)

Kansas law requires that all boats have one type I, II, III, or V PFD of proper size, in serviceable condition, not in an enclosed compartment, and readily accessible for each person on board or being towed.

Serviceability means that fastening hardware is not broken or does not work; that webbing straps are not ripped, torn or missing; that fabric tears have not resulted in loss of buoyant material; and that buoyant material is not hardened or contaminated. The PFD must be structurally sound and free of rotted or corroded components.

Readily accessible means the PFDs are plainly visible to the passengers, in an area that can be reached in an emergency without opening a compartment, wrapping material or reaching under part of the boat's hull to get to them.

NOTE: A type V PFD is approved only for the activity listed on the label and must be worn to be legal.

Persons 12 years of age and under are required to wear a type I, II, or III PFD while aboard or being towed by a boat. A life belt or ring does not satisfy this requirement.

Boats 16 feet or longer, except canoes and kayaks, also must carry one type IV throwable flotation device that is in serviceable condition and not in an enclosed compartment.

It is recommended that any person being towed on water skis, kneeboards, or similar devices should wear a properly fitted PFD. Each person operating or riding on a personal watercraft must wear a properly fitted PFD. Sailboarders are not required to wear a PFD, but it is recommended.

Inflatable PFDs are required to be USCG approved and must meet the general serviceability requirements for all types of PFDs and the additional requirements specific to inflatable PFDs.

Fire Extinguishers

Every motorboat, unless exempt, must have the correct number, size and type of Coast Guard approved fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers must be operable and readily accessible.

Motorboats with USCG approved built-in or affixed fire extinguishers in the motor areas are exempt from having a fire extinguisher in the motor area. They are required to have one BI or one BII fire extinguisher in the living space or galley, according to boat class.

Fire Extinguisher Requirements:

Class A: less than 16 ft. -- at least one type BI fire extinguisher shall be carried if the vessel has one or more of the following features:

- an inboard engine;
- closed compartments under thwarts and seats where portable fuel tanks may be stored; (Examples of enclosed compartments include: live wells and storage compartments.)
- double bottom construction not sealed to the hull or not completely filled with flotation materials;
- closed compartments in which combustible or flammable materials are stored;
- permanently installed fuel tanks.

Class I: 16 ft. to less than 26 ft. -- at least one type BI fire extinguisher shall be carried.

Class 2: 26 ft. to less than 40 ft. -- two type BI or one type BII fire extinguisher. If boat has a USCG approved built-in or affixed fire extinguisher, add two type BI fire extinguishers or one type BII fire extinguisher.

Ventilation

All closed-construction, fuel-powered motorboats must have ventilators to remove explosive vapors from engine and fuel tank compartments. Be sure that the boat is well ventilated before starting, especially after fueling. Gasoline vapors are heavier than air and accumulate in the bottom of the boat, creating a dangerous condition.

Backfire Flame Control

Inboard, fuel-powered engines must be equipped with a backfire flame arrestor on the carburetor. The flame arrestor must meet U.S. Coast Guard approval.

Capacity Plates

All boats less than 20 feet, which were built after November 1, 1972, and designed to carry two or more people, shall have a permanently-affixed capacity plate.

No person shall operate any vessel beyond the safe passenger and carrying capacity and motor horsepower of the vessel as specified on the capacity plate.

Navigation Lights

All boats must use navigation lights while operating on Kansas waters between sunset and sunrise.

Motorboats less than 40 feet long must have navigation lights shown in figures 1, 2, or 3. Motorboats 40 - 65 feet long must use lights shown in figure 1 or 2.

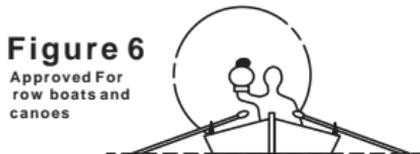
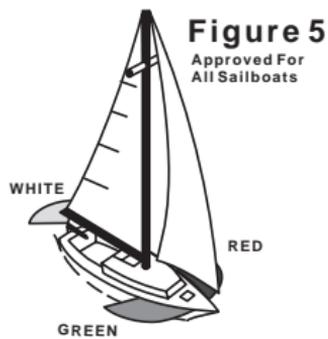
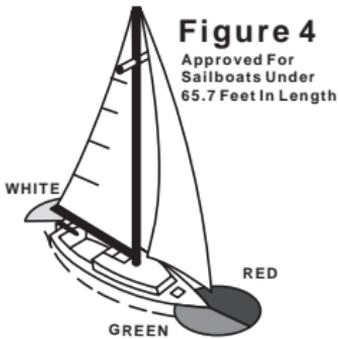
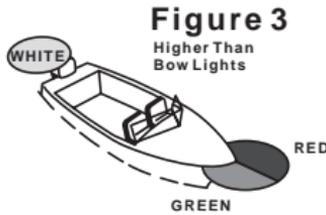
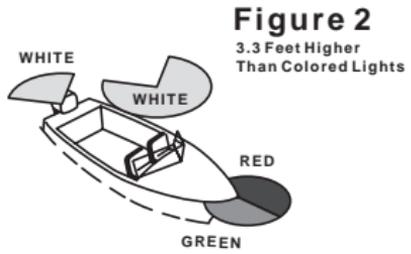
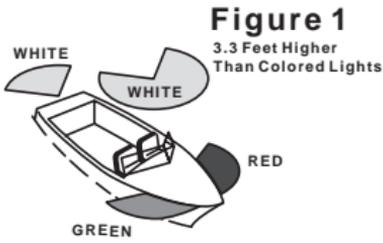
Sailboats must have navigation lights shown in figures 4, 5, or 6. Sailboats under power must conform to motorboat navigation light requirements.

Manually propelled boats shall carry, ready at hand, a flashlight or lantern showing a white light exhibited in sufficient time to prevent a collision.

Boats at anchor must display an all-around white anchor light unless anchored in a designated mooring area.

Sound Producing Devices

Motorboats from 16 feet to less than 26 feet must have a whistle or horn capable of producing a four- to six-second blast of sound. In addition to a whistle or horn, boats 26 feet or longer must have a bell with a clear tone.



NAVIGATIONAL LIGHTING DIAGRAM

Marine Toilets

Human sewage from boats is a source of pollution that poses environmental and health problems. It is important that you dispose of your sewage properly while boating.

It is unlawful to place, leave, or discharge sewage into waters of this state. All boats with a marine sanitation device shall be in compliance with all state and federal requirements and registration.

Equipment Suggestions

Boat owners are advised to carry a Coast Guard-approved visual distress signal, flashlight, first aid kit, paddles, boarding ladder, tool kit, extra line, spare spark plugs, spare bilge plug, spare propellers, and anchor.

VESSEL SANITATION LOCATIONS

Region 1

Lake Wilson Marina (*Wilson Reservoir*)
RR2 Box 163, Sylvan Grove, KS 67841
(785) 685-2392

Region 2

Lake Perry Marina (*Perry Reservoir*)
10770 Perry Park Drive, Perry, KS 66073
(785) 597-5555

VESSEL SANITATION LOCATIONS

Region 2 (cont')

DJ's Rock Creek Marina (*Perry Reservoir*)

6049 West Lake Road, Ozawkie, KS 66070

(785) 484-2656

Thunderbird Marina (*Milford Reservoir*)

P.O. Box 548, Junction City, KS 66441

(785) 238-5864

Milford Lake (*Milford Reservoir*)

8811 State Park Road, Milford, KS 66514

(785) 238-3014

Region 4

Cheney Lake (*Cheney Reservoir*)

16000 NE 50th St, Cheney, KS 67025

(316) 541-3664

Cheney Marina (*Cheney Reservoir*)

9912 South Titan Road, Cheney, KS 67025

(316) 542-0163

Shady Creek Marina (*El Dorado Reservoir*)

1000 NE Marina Rd P.O. Box 287, El Dorado, KS 67042

(620) 321-0943

Region 5

Lighthouse Bay Marina (*Pomona Reservoir*)

4009 Marina Road, P.O. Box 60, Vassar, KS 66543

(785) 828-4777

OPERATION REQUIREMENTS

Alcohol and Drugs

It is unlawful to operate or attempt to operate any boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Any person who operates or attempts to operate a boat is deemed to have given consent to an alcohol and/or drug test.

Failure to submit to a test will result in loss of boating privileges for three months, in addition to any other penalties prescribed by law, rule, or regulation.

Conviction of boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs is punishable by fine and/or imprisonment, and the loss of boating privileges. Successful completion of an approved boating safety course may also be required.

Where is wakeless speed required?

Wakeless speed is required close to boats engaged in fishing or moored, boat docks, launching areas, swimming areas, or within designated no wake areas. You are responsible for injury or damage caused by your boat's wake.

What size outboard motor can I put on my boat?

Your outboard motor cannot exceed the maximum horsepower listed on the capacity plate on your boat.

How many people can I have on my boat?

It is unlawful to operate a boat beyond the safe passenger and cargo carrying capacity that is stated on the capacity plate on your boat.

What about water skiing?

Boats must be equipped with a wide-angle rearview mirror that is properly placed to provide maximum vision of the person being towed, or there must be an observer in the boat in addition to the operator. The observer must be a responsible person at least 12 years of age.

No person shall operate any vessel carrying passengers or cargo beyond the safe carrying capacity of the vessel. A passenger is any individual who is carried in or on a vessel. Any item attached to a vessel becomes part of the vessel and shall be included in the overall capacity of the vessel.

It is illegal to operate a vessel while towing water skiers, surfboards, or similar devices from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise.

Who can operate my boat?

A person under 12 years of age cannot operate a motorboat unless accompanied and under the direct supervision of a parent or other person over 17 years of age. All persons must comply with boater education laws. (*See requirements on page 24.*)

What is negligent operation?

Negligent operation is the failure to exercise the degree of care necessary to prevent the endangering of another person or their property. Some examples are bowriding, excessive speed, and operating too close to another boat.

What are the driving rules on the water?

Sailboats and manually powered craft usually have the right of way over motorboats. Motorboats should stay clear of sailboats and manually-powered craft and should not create a wake that may cause them trouble. Sailboats and manually-powered craft must yield the right of way when overtaking motorboats or when the motorboat is at anchor.

In overtaking and passing situations, the boat being passed has the right of way, and the passing boat is required to stay clear. Pass when it is safe and at a speed that will not endanger the overtaken vessel.

When meeting another boat head-on, stay to the right. When two boats are crossing paths, the boat on the right has the right-of-way and should maintain course and speed. The boat on the left should change its course to the right until the other boat passes. In narrow channels, boats underway must stay right of the middle of the channel.

When one boat passes another traveling in the same direction, the passing boat shall pass when it is safe to do so and at a speed and distance that does not endanger the overtaken boat.

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

Personal watercraft are vessels that use an inboard motor powering a jet pump as their primary source of propulsion and are designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling inside the vessel.

Personal watercraft are Class A boats and must comply with all boating laws, registration procedures, operation and equipment requirements in addition to the regulations specific to personal watercraft.

Every person on board a personal watercraft shall wear a Type I, Type II, Type III, or Type V USCG approved PFD.

Each person operating a personal watercraft equipped with a lanyard engine cut-off shall attach the lanyard to the operator's person, clothing, or PFD.

Personal watercraft shall not be operated between sunset and sunrise.

Personal watercraft shall be operated at no wake speeds (5 m.p.h. or less) when within 100 feet of any of the following: docks, boat ramps, swimmers, bridges, moored or anchored boats, sewage pump-out facilities, or non-motorized watercraft.

A person shall not operate a personal watercraft unless facing forward. Personal watercraft shall not be used to tow a person on skis, kneeboards, inflatable crafts, or any other device unless the personal watercraft is designed to accommodate more than one person. *See page 17 & 19 for more information about towing with a PWC.*

Maneuvers which unreasonably endanger others are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, wake-jumping and weaving through vessel traffic.

No person age 12 through 15 years of age shall operate a personal watercraft unless a person 17 years of age or older is aboard the personal watercraft, or unless they have successfully completed a Department approved safe boating course.

SAFETY & COURTESY TIPS

Courtesy docks are for your convenience. Be courteous by leaving your boat there no longer than 15 minutes.

Emergency situations require advance planning. Think about what to do if someone falls overboard or if there is a fire, breakdown, or collision. Practice putting on your life jacket in the water and throwing a type IV personal flotation device. Know the various distress signals such as slowly and repeatedly raising and lowering your outstretched arms. If your boat capsizes, it will usually float. Stay with it for flotation and to make yourself more visible. Put on a PFD.

ACCIDENT REPORTING

What should I do if there is an accident?

1. Help other people involved in the accident.
2. Notify local law enforcement officers immediately by the quickest means available.
3. Give your name and address to any injured person or owner of property that is damaged in the accident.
4. You must notify the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks within 48 hours if the accident involves a death, treatable injury, or disappearance of a person(s).
5. Boat operators whose vessels have been involved in accidents with property damage greater than \$2,000 shall report the accident to the Department within five days of its occurrence.

Boating accident forms are available from the Law Enforcement Division or any boating officer.

U.S. AIDS TO NAVIGATION WATERWAY MARKER SYSTEM

What do the markers tell me?

Markers give you the important information that will make your boating experience safe and enjoyable. They identify restricted or dangerous waters. They tell you where wakeless speed is required and where boating is not allowed. They mark channels. They alert you to SCUBA diving activities.

SCUBA divers must place a buoy at or near the point of submergence. The buoy must bear a red flag of proper size and requirements. It is unlawful to display this flag when diving or spearfishing is not in progress.



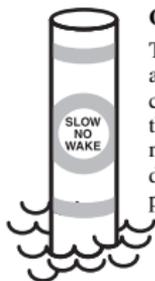
Divers Flag

Used by recreational divers. Required by law in some states. Flag color is red with white stripes.



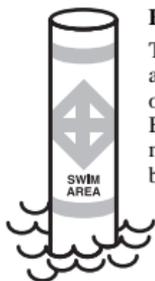
Alpha Flag

Displayed by vessels restricted in their ability to maneuver while engaged in diving operations. Flag color is blue with white stripe.



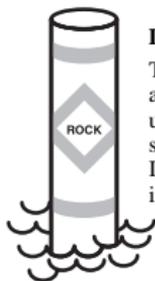
Control or Restriction Buoys

These buoys are all white with an orange circle. They indicate controlled or restricted areas on the water such as speed limits, no fishing, no skiing, no scuba diving. Information on them is printed in black.



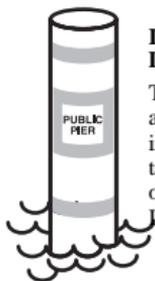
Boats Prohibited Buoy

These buoys are all white with an orange cross inside. They mean BOATS KEEP OUT. They most often indicate swimming beaches.



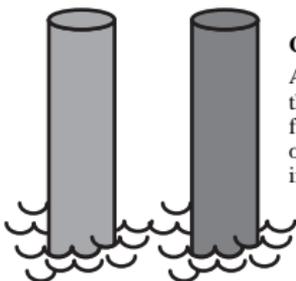
Danger Buoy

These buoys are all white with an orange diamond. They are used to warn boaters of dangers such as rocks or cables. Information on them is printed in black.



Information or Direction Buoys

These buoys are all white with an orange rectangle. They inform boaters of directions, distances, locations, supplies, and other nonregulatory information. Information is printed in black.



Channel Marker Buoys

All-green and all-red companion buoys indicate that the boating channel is between them. In flowing water, the red buoy is on the right side of the channel when facing upstream. The boating channel lies between these buoys.



All White Buoys with Black Vertical Stripes

These buoys indicate a dangerous area. Boats should not pass between the buoy and the shore.



Mooring Buoys

These buoys are all white with a blue stripe midway between the top and waterline. They will be spherical or ovate in shape with a minimum of 18 inches above the water line. Authorization for placement shall be regulated the same as any other buoy, aid, or marker when placed more than 150 feet from shore.



All White Buoys with Red Vertical Stripes

These buoys show the center of the channel and should be passed close to on either side.

BOATER EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Any person born on or after January 1, 1989 must complete an approved boater safety education course in order to operate a motorboat or sailboat on public waters in Kansas.

This requirement does not apply to a person operating a motorboat or sailboat accompanied by and under the direct and audible supervision of a person over 17 years of age who either: possesses a certificate of completion of an approved boater safety education course, or is legally exempt from the requirement. This requirement does not apply to anyone 21 years of age or older, regardless of their date of birth.

To operate a personal watercraft alone, persons over 11 and under 16 years of age must successfully complete a boaters safety course.

A listing of boater safety courses offered by KDWP, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and U.S. Power Squadrons is maintained on the KDWP web site at: www.kdwp.state.ks.us. BOAT/US Foundation in Virginia maintains a listing of classes at 1-800-336-BOAT. Home study courses are available all year long. Classroom based courses are usually taught by volunteers and form throughout the year, primarily January through June.

KANSAS WILDLIFE AND PARKS BOATER SAFETY COURSES:



Home Study Text Book -

Contact hatcaptain@wp.state.ks.us or 785-296-2281 to have a home study textbook mailed to your door. There is no fee.

Home Study Internet -

www.boat-ed.com

\$15 fee to take the test.



Classroom Instruction -

Volunteer instructors and Department staff organize classes in their communities. Class locations can be found on the Department web site. For more information contact us at: hatcaptain@wp.state.ks.us or feedback@wp.state.ks.us or at 785-296-2281. Some classroom courses may have a fee.



**BOTE O LAUNCHA
SEGURA**



**BOTE O LAUNCHA
INTELIGENTE**

¡USALO!

U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY COURSES:

The Coast Guard Auxiliary, made up of dedicated volunteers, is charged by Congress with assisting in the performance of any Coast Guard function, duty, role, mission or operation authorized by law.

The Auxiliary is probably best known for educating the public through their boating safety classes for all ages, ranging from basic boating to advanced navigation. They offer free boat safety checks to recreational boaters, those who rent boats and operators of commercial fishing vessels to help ensure their craft complies with federal and state regulations, as well as carries recommended safety equipment aboard.

For more information, call the Coast Guard Infoline at 1-800-368-5647 or visit their website at <http://cgaux.org/> or <http://uscgaux.ria.net/8wr-d31>

U.S. POWER SQUADRONS COURSES

USPS offers a seven-session course on Propulsion Systems, Boat Handling & Seamanship, PWC, Docking, Lines, Anchoring, Trailering, Required & Recommended Equipment, Navigation Lights, Responsibilities, Aids to Navigation, and Navigation Rules.

For more information, call 1-888-FOR-USPS or contact our web site at www.USPS.org

OPERATION BOAT SMART

Key Principles

- Wearing life jackets saves lives
- Boater education saves lives
- Safe boats save lives
- Safe and sober boating saves lives



Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs described herein is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin or ancestry religion, sex, age, handicap or disability. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to the Office of the Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, 1020 S Kansas Ave. Room 200, Topeka, KS 66612 or to the U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, Office of Boating Safety, 2100 2nd St. SW, Washington, D.C. 20593-0001. 01/03

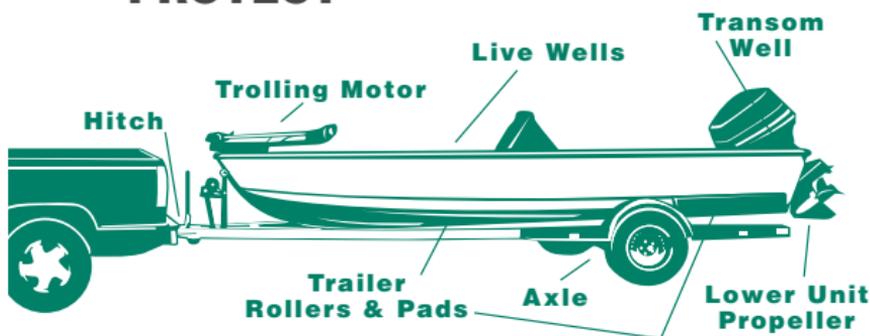
STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS

CLEAN
REMOVE
DRAIN
INSPECT TO PROTECT



**STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!**

Clean Boats, Clean Waters



WHEN YOU LEAVE A BODY OF WATER:

Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.

Drain water from equipment (boat, motor, trailer, live wells) before transporting.

Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (equipment, clothing, dogs, etc).

Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.